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A
T R E A T I S E
UPON THE
T R A D E

FROM
Great-Britain to Africa;

R Humbly recommended to the

A T T E N T I O N
O F
G O V E R N M E N T.

BY AN AFRICAN MERCHANT.

L O N D O N:

Printed for R. BALDWIN, No. 47, Pater-noster Row.

M DCC LXXII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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F R O M

Great-Britain to Africa.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

WHOEVER is thoroughly acquainted with the true interest of Great Britain, must know, that to her foreign commerce she is indebted for her present greatness, it's support and preservation. The very land of England depends upon the sea; to commerce we owe the encrease of our national treasure, the breed and excellency and plentiful supply of seamen; the security of our public credit; the regular payment of the funded interest, and in short, every advantage which can excite a spirit of industry to acquire the

comforts of life, and will at the same time raise in the possessors, a bravery of soul to protect and defend that country, from which they derive a solid property in so many valuable acquisitions.

It must therefore be an undeniable maxim, that we are bound in prudence and duty to encrease this commerce to the utmost, especially between the mother country and her colonies, since thereby many mutual advantages will arise to both ; and it is equally clear, that it is our interest to restrain the trade of France, our natural enemy, as much as we possibly can ; actively, by preventing their encroachments ; passively, by encouraging and enabling our own merchants to rival and oppose, if not exceed them at foreign markets.

C H A P. I.

*The IMPORTANCE of the TRADE from GREAT BRITAIN
to AFRICA.*

IF the benefits of foreign commerce are so great, and so essentially necessary to the support of Great Britain and her Colonies, and the improvements therein so restrictive of our enemies power, if disposed, to hurt us, how vast is the importance of our trade to Africa, which is the first principle and foundation of all the rest ; the main spring of the machine, which sets every wheel in motion : a trade which arises almost entirely from ourselves, our exports being chiefly

chiefly our own manufactures, or such as are purchased with them ; and the returns gold, ivory, wax, dyeing woods and negroes : the four first articles of home consumption, or manufactured for exporting ; the last affording a most prodigious employment to our people, both by sea and land : without whom our plantations could not be improved or carried on, nor should we have any shipping passing between the colonies, and mother country ; whereas by their labours our sugars, tobacco, and numberless other articles are raised, which employ an incredible number of ships, and these ships in their turn must employ a much greater number of handicraft trades at home ; and the merchandizes they bring home and carry out, pay such considerable sums to government, that of them consist the most flourishing branches of the revenue ; so that both for exports and imports, the improvement of our national revenue, the encouragement of industry at home, the supply of our colonies abroad, and the increase of our navigation ; the African trade is so very beneficial to Great Britain, so essentially necessary to the very being of her colonies, that without it neither could we flourish, nor they long subsist.

There is also one very peculiar advantage in this trade, which is this ; we need never fear that Africa will rival us, for it produces no one commodity similar to the productions of Great Britain, and consequently should any colonies be established there, they can never through any opposition of interests be under the necessity, or have the least desire to throw off their subordination to their mother country.

In this trade great improvements might be introduced, were we properly to attend to, and encourage them. Consider the vast continent of Africa, the extent of coast within the limits of our trade by act of parliament, (from Port Sallee in Barbary, to the Cape of Good Hope, both inclusive) an extent of near three thousand leagues, most advantageously situated for commerce, the inland parts rich in gold, and other very valuable commodities beyond description, watered with innumerable rivers navigable for many leagues up the country, the soil amazingly fruitful, and the people numerous. From a concurrence of such circumstances what advantages may not be expected? The French were fully sensible of this, and in the year 1701 presented a memorial to their government wherein they alledge, “their West
“India Islands cannot subsist, unless due encouragement
“is given to the African trade;” in consequence of which they had many privileges granted them then, and a few years ago, the bounties and exemptions allowed to them for that trade were estimated very little short of 45,000l. annually. If France has deemed this trade of such importance to her, it must be of much greater to us, who may be said to subsist only as a maritime power. In the name then of the British merchants trading to Africa, in the name of our country and colonies, let me humbly address the government to make this trade more the object of their attention; which in it’s present state is productive of so many * advantages,

* For the number of ships employed and other particulars, the Appendix is referred to, that the thread of the argument may not be broken by inserting them

vantages, and is capable of great improvement, both by removing those difficulties, under which it at present labours, and by carrying into execution many plans that might be suggested. In what light then but in that of enemies to their country can we look on those, who, under the specious plea of establishing universal freedom, endeavour to strike at the root of this trade, the foundation of our commerce, the support of our colonies, the life of our navigation, and first cause of our national industry and riches? What vain pretence of liberty * can infatuate people to run into so much licentiousness, as to assert a trade is unlawful, which custom immemorial, and various acts of parliament have ratified and given a sanction to? Could they support their enthusiastic arguments from scripture, antient usage, or the laws of the land, the African trade would soon be effectually ruined, for at present the richest adventurers in it are such men, as would scorn to be engaged in any pursuit, but what the laws of God and man would fully sanctify; and were this trade contrary to

in this part of the work; and indeed this being only a brief state of facts, (all which are or can be proved) and the Appendix containing most of those proofs, that will probably be the longest of the two. — See letter (A) in the Appendix.

* One of the French kings, through a sort of vanity peculiar to that nation, issued an edict, that throughout his realm the Franks, as free by name, should be *all* declared freemen: yet the king of France remains a most despotic monarch, and his people the worst of slaves; and the legality of foreign slavery is admitted there, for by a law in France, no African slave can be imported without a security of his being sent back again in two or three years at farthest. The last step we should be wise enough to follow: the first our Gracious King can never take, as it implies a manifest absurdity.

to those laws, were it even cruel or inhuman, near a million of money might be withdrawn from it in a short time, and a stagnation of cash at home, and utter ruin in our colonies abroad must inevitably ensue.

C H A P. II.

The LEGALITY *of the* AFRICAN TRADE.

ON this head I shall leave declamation to my opponents, whose cause requires the florid force of oratory for one plain reason—because it has no truth to support it. They have indeed the specious, and I the invidious side of the question: they attack the tender feelings of misinformed humanity; I appeal to strict justice, arising from custom immemorial and positive laws: it were enough for me, were I totally to drop the consideration of *justice*, and apply to the *law* only as it now stands, but I disclaim the one without the other, and to prove that neither have as yet abolished the idea of slavery, or established that of universal freedom, in a summary way I shall barely state plain facts and argue from them.

The earliest ages had their * slaves, both taken in war and purchased with money, and it has been the universal practice of not only every barbarous but every civilized nation. By the law of Moses the Israelites might purchase slaves from the heathens, and even their own people might become slaves to

* For a more ample discussion of this, see the Appendix letter B. where Mercator's letters, and observations on them are inserted, as they would take up too much room here.

to their brethren. The Gibeonites who gained a promise of peace, and obtained a league by craft from the princes of the congregation, were yet consigned to perpetual slavery, and made "hewers of wood, and drawers of water" unto all the congregation," in which state they continued until the total destruction of Jerusalem.

Jesus Christ, the saviour of mankind and founder of our religion, left the moral laws and civil rights of mankind on their old foundations: his kingdom was not of this world, nor did he interfere with national laws: he did not repeal that of slaves, nor assert an universal freedom, except from sin: with him bond or free were accepted, if they behaved righteously. In the year of Christ 692, the laws of slaves were settled on the foundation of the holy scriptures by Ina, king of the West Saxons, from which people's rights we now claim, and enjoy several privileges, as Gavelkind in Kent, &c. confirmed by William the Conqueror. Mahomet, the false prophet, and establisher of as false a religion, was the first who enfranchised slaves with a political view of drawing them over to his party. From the earliest accounts of our own country, there were slaves here; from the time of the Druids, who, according to the customs of the ancient Gauls, sometimes sacrificed them to their God Woden, to the landing of the Romans, who are said to have worn out the * hands and bodies of the Britons, with clearing the woods and embanking the marshes: then again under the

* C

Saxon

* See Cambden's *Britannia*, and Brown's posthumous works.

Saxon feudal tenures, which were of the severest kind, to the time of William the Conqueror, who introduced the Norman feudal system, which was of a milder nature ; as, from a century before that time to the year 1318, charters granted to settlers in cities, and power created by wealth gained by commerce, tended to bring mankind to a nearer equality ; but still there was no formal interposition of the legislature * to prohibit personal servitude ; and both at, and ever since that time, even English subjects by their feudal tenures were still slaves by the laws of England, till 12 Car. II. c. 24 : which shews that the laws concerning *free* British subjects did not consider even our *native slaves* for their object : and if they did not, it follows of course, that no laws, either before or since that time, can consider *foreign slaves* as their object ; because as they are not expressly named in any part of our statute laws, any more than our own native slaves were in those laws, which concerned the free British subjects, they therefore surely cannot claim being included ; as, in that case, they would enjoy rights superior to those of any natural born British subject.

There does not at present, in any one country of the world, exist a law that abolishes slavery, or declares the necessity of universal freedom : and in our own country, which we boast to be the seat of freedom, two of the greatest lawyers we have had, gave their opinion, that “ slaves do not in the least alter their situation or state, “ either by being christend, or coming into England.”

The

* See Robertson's Progress of Society, Hume, &c.

The very last African act vests the property of fort-negroes in the king, and the last but one encourages his subjects in general to purchase them. If therefore there is faith in a British act of parliament, this trade must be legal ; though to quiet weak minds, and silence the licentious noisy declaimers about liberty, which they do not understand, who suppose it can subsist without a security of * property, it may be expedient, that government should positively declare the laws, which are to take place with respect to slaves for the future ; and should lay them down in such plain terms, that it may not be possible to mistake them : and if the African trade is in reality so contrary to law and humanity as some have set forth, let it be demolished at once by an act of the legislature, for it certainly is more eligible to be torn to pieces by a lion, than gnawed to death by vermin. But could such conduct be deemed judicious, or even defensible, when religion with its attendant justice, when the law as it now stands evidently speak for the slave trade, and when even humanity pleads as strongly in favour of it ; for it is a well known fact, that if the slaves which the Africans bring to market are so old or blemished, that they cannot get what they think a sufficient price for them, they will cut their throats before the faces of the Europeans. How happy then is the slave who is rescued, and how justifiable he who rescues him, from a master where he has no property, and even his life is not secure, in order to his being transferred

* C 2

to

* For Arguments proving negroes absolute property—See letter (C) in the Appendix.

to one, who cannot invade either with impunity ! Besides these slaves are generally (perhaps ninety-nine out of one hundred) convicted felons, whose *lives* are forfeited to the laws of their country, though their punishment is commuted into *slavery*. This has been denied on the supposition that Africa could not have so many felons yearly, as there are slaves sold to the Europeans. To elucidate this, consider that Great Britain has above two thousand felons convicted yearly ; Africa does not sell near two hundred thousand slaves yearly ; that would be but in the proportion of one hundred to one ; and Africa is not only one hundred, but perhaps one thousand times larger and more populous than Great Britain : no wonder then, if from thence there should be shipped yearly two hundred thousand convicts. These are just so many lives saved and rendered useful to the community, which advantages would be totally lost were the slave trade universally given up ; for as the Africans are naturally thieves, though slavery is the certain punishment on conviction, our breaking up the slave trade might indeed alter that punishment to that of death, but would not reform them. Shall we then destroy the chief source of our national industry and riches, by establishing universal freedom on their behalf, who have forfeited their claim to it, and are in law not even entitled to life ? God forbid that any enthusiastic rant should so far deprive us of our senses, as to drive us to take such a desperate and unnecessary step : a step so unavailing to those, for whose benefit it should seem to be calculated ; for were England to
drop

drop the African trade directly, France and Spain would as directly avail themselves of it, and the poor Africans remain still in bondage under much severer taskmasters.

Mr. * Benezet, of North America, who wishes the West India islands sunk in the sea, rather than we should carry on the slave trade for their service, may possibly have the same kindness and good will to Great Britain, and may sincerely long to see the seat of empire travel westward, and the dominion of the saints established in Boston: and yet, their practice ill agrees with their preaching, for though they pretend to wish we would not trade to Africa, their trade there for slaves is daily increasing; and for one negro in North America ten years ago, there are now five hundred, of which they are chiefly the importers, and their number of ships in that trade daily encreases.

We must therefore watch all the attempts of our rivals in trade, and prevent their undermining us, by maintaining our just and legal privileges, and despising the idle clamor of designing or interested men. In the last of these lights, perhaps, we may look upon "An argument in the case of James Sommerfet, a negro, endeavouring to prove the unlawfulness of slavery in England. By Mr. Hargrave counsellor for the negro in that cause." This I have read with attention, and find Mr. Hargrave has done his duty by saying all he could for his client, *endeavouring to prove*, but *not proving* the unlawfulness

* For a further account of, and considerations on that work—See the Appendix letter (D.)

lawfulness of slavery in England, and artfully evading the case in point, because he must be sensible it would make against him. The strength of his argument, or rather the aim of it, for strength it has none, lies in a bold assertion, that all slavery has ceased, and that this is a new slavery against law, which by the Africans being adjudged slaves here will creep into our constitution, and introduce domestic slavery. His whole book may be answered briefly thus--Acts of parliament have confirmed my legal right to trade for African slaves abroad, and other acts have confirmed my legal right to bring into England, and carry out again unmolested all articles purchased in trade.---Mr. Hargrave may talk and write round about the question, but can never meet that single argument in the face.---A few extracts with brief remarks on them will shew him, I have paid due attention to him.

“P. 21. It must be confessed the practice is ancient, and has been almost universal.” This is true.---“P. 24. It is said to have begun in the year 1508.” Here he has been misinformed; letter (B) in the appendix gives the true history.

---“P. 26. As the English law has no provisions to regulate any other slavery than villenage, none but that can be lawful.” This is a false conclusion; for can any thing be unlawful, against which there is no law? therefore this and all his other arguments from the villenage laws, are not to the case in point; and here is his fort, for he owns,

“P. 46. Other arguments I confess are less powerful, being merely presumptive.”---“P. 58. The law takes no notice

of a negro." It does : it allows me to deal in that merchandise, and freely to import and export *all merchandise*. If the law says nothing, shall the lawyer's word deprive me of real property ? Domestic slavery and African slavery can by no implication be blended, so as that the same argument can possibly affect both. Here the counsellor pleads for his client, and endeavours to mislead the court in his behalf.---"P. 67. slavery of negroes in England is unnecessary." True, and their coming here improper. I want to carry them back, but Mr. Hargrave will not permit it.---"P. 61. inconveniences will attend the slave trade being deemed lawful." Worse inconveniences, nay fatal consequences, would attend its being declared illegal by any real power, such as that of the legislature.---"P. 70. In Scotland domestic slavery is unknown, except coal-hewers and salt-makers, who are compellable to serve for life : " that is, all are free except those who are not free.---"P. 72. Slaves are free on coming to France." They are not, they must be sent back from whence they came, as indeed he confesses, "P. 74. masters acting as directed by government may send them back, otherwise they lose their property in them." English merchants will obey government when ever they know its commands, and be content to lose their property if they do not take proper care of it.---"P. 75. How can it be unjust to divest the master's property in a slave, when carried into a country where for the wisest and most humane reasons such property is known to be prohibited ?" Very right, but it is not so known here, nor ever so declared by
any

any real authority.---“ P. 76. Presuming a contract would be a modification, but the liberty must be absolute.” The acts of parliament for the encouragement of the African slave trade supersede the necessity of a contract.---“ P. 77. Modification is most oppressive by removing a negro to a place where slavery will again attach upon him with all its original severity. P. 80. Negroes though under contract cannot be sent out of the kingdom, yet Englishmen agreeing to go beyond sea are compellable thereto.” I congratulate the Africans on the superiority here planned out for them, but the free-born Briton will tell Mr. Hargrave and the Africans, that neither can they enjoy, nor he bestow so unaccountable a privilege; that foreign slavery cannot introduce domestic, nor the Britons catch it from the Africans, as if it was a contagious disorder: Mr. Hargrave has proved too much in one sense, and too little in that which was essentially necessary to his cause; for he has mistaken his point and snapped the string of his argument by overstraining it in *endeavouring to prove* the unlawfulness of what is ratified by acts of parliament, by ancient usage, by religion, by justice, and by true humanity. Government will undoubtedly still support itself and its commerce by a timely act of parliament, and a steady resolution to adhere to it; and not let slip the advantages flowing from so extensive a trade, and such an immense length of coast, of which I will now give a short description, that we may more fully understand any subsequent remarks upon it.

C H A P. III.

A brief DESCRIPTION of the AFRICAN COAST, within the Limits of our TRADE.

THE extent of that part of the African Coast, to which all subjects of Great Britain are free to trade, reaches from Port Sallee in Barbary to the Cape of Good Hope, both inclusive: that is, from about the thirty-sixth degree of north latitude to the thirty-fourth degree of south latitude, including the long coast that runs east and west.

From Port Sallee to Cape Blanco being about six hundred leagues of coast and within the limits of our African trade, it seemed strange there should be no harbour; yet such was its character, till captain Glas found one, and was assisted by a merchant in obtaining a grant of an exclusive trade; and having a ship of two hundred and fifty tons fitted out at a great expence, with which he entered the port in about $31\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of north latitude, he procured from the natives a cession of it to the crown of England, which is now at the board of trade, with an exact plan of the harbour, named by him Port Hillsborough. He was there in the year 1764, and went from thence with some goods unsaleable there to one of the Canary islands, where he was seized and imprisoned by the Spaniards for twelve months, notwithstanding some spirited remonstrances sent from England to Spain. His people in the

mean time traded * with the natives ; but whether from their treachery, or their own want of conduct, were attacked by them, several murdered and a few escaped in the long-boat, who described the country to be healthy, the cattle good and plenty, and that they were constantly supplied with fresh meat. The merchant, who fitted out captain Glas, finding himself not so strongly supported as he expected against the Spaniards, and discouraged by captain Glas's tragical death on the Irish coast, dropped all further pursuits of that trade.

Another captain made a very successful voyage to the Rio del Oro, latitude 23. 30. but whether he had contented himself, or had made a stroke, as the term is; that is, fraudulently brought off some free people, he would neither go there again, or give any information to others of what might be done there.

Arguin is the next port in about 20 degrees north latitude, where the Dutch once had a fort, which the French took in 1677, and which was afterwards ceded to them, but after some time they abandoned it, as it was so far from their gum forests.

Port Anderic lies about 20 leagues to the southward of Arguin, where great quantities of gum were sometimes bought, though the risk of getting it on board was very great from the high sea, that rolls at the landing place.

The province of Senegambia, now in the hands of the British government, includes the river Senegal, which
 5 opens

* See letter [E.] in the Appendix.

opens into the western ocean in nearly 16 degrees, and the river Gambia nearly in 13½ degrees north latitude; between which near cape Verde lies Goree, still in the hands of the French.

Up the river Senegal is the island of the same name, called also St. Louis, where the governor of the province resides, and from whence we ship all our gum. At the seasons for purchasing it our traders go up to Podor and Galam, two settlements made by the French when the river was in their possession, the first of which is now repairing, and the latter has proved so destructive to Europeans, that probably no settlement could be made to advantage by them. The only means, that seem eligible, are to breed up some young Africans in England, teach them our language and the mechanic arts of mining and other trades, which might turn to great account, if we made a settlement with them at Galam; the country round being esteemed rich in gold mines, but the natives not knowing how to work them.

In the river Gambia is Fort James in the hands of the government under a lieutenant governor, subject to the governor of Senegal. This river is navigable for vessels of two hundred tons as high up as Fatatenda, which is about six hundred miles. The trade of both these rivers might be greatly improved, and the society of merchants, now trading to Africa, have laid before the lords of trade some particulars, of which no doubt they will avail themselves properly, to the mutual advantage of the private fair trader and

the community ; and should any abuses arise here, similar to those on other parts of the Coast, most probably will apply the remedies they may on experience find effectual there.

It may also be worth their consideration, whether the French factory at Albreda in the river Gambia, within a mile and a half of Fort James, is not an improper encroachment. Goree would be of little use to the French, if they had not this factory to be supplied from it. By this they rival us in trade, in open violation of the tenth article of the treaty of peace in 1763, which is, “ his Britannic Majesty
“ shall restore to France the island of Goree in the condition
“ it was, when conquered ; and his most Christian Majesty
“ cedes in full right, and guarantees to the king of Great
“ Britain the river Senegal, with the forts and factories of St.
“ Lewis, Podor and Galam, and with all the rights and de-
“ pendencies of the said river Senegal.”

The English were in possession of the river Gambia, and had a fort there in 1627. The French had no settlement in Senegal till 1673, when they built a small fort there, and in 1677 took the Dutch forts at Arguin and Goree ; and when the Dutch ceded them by the treaty of Nimeguen, they became dependencies of Senegal ; and they and Albreda were always under the command of the governor of the river Senegal : Therefore even if the French had once a right to a settlement there, (which they could not have) that right by the express letter of the treaty is now given up. They were kept out of the river till 1730, when the English company,
being

being in a declining state, allowed them to come there on account of a contract, to deliver negroes to them at 10l. a head, for a quantity of gum Senegal to be received at 12l. a ton. This contract continued but a short time, for they soon got into the slave trade for themselves, and vessels were continually passing and repassing between Senegal and Albreda with European goods, and African returns for them, which fully proves, that Albreda cannot be claimed as belonging to Goree; since that island, before it was taken in 1758, was subordinate to Senegal; which is also confessed on both sides; for before the last war, the governors of James's fort always insisted upon an exclusive right to trade in Gambia, and it was the custom of the French governor of Albreda, always to ask his permission, if he wanted to send a canoe up the river; and it appears also by our sending men of war to drive them from thence, as we frequently have done since the peace, though without any lasting effect; for when our ships arrive, they remove their effects up the country, and leave their mudwall factory to our shot, and sailors, who have sometimes landed and destroyed it; but when the men of war quit the river, the French return, repair and resettle their factory, and as they have no right to complain, take no notice of the injury.

Near Cape Roxo or Rouge, which begins the windward coast, about twelve degrees north latitude, is the river Kafamanza, where small vessels may go up and trade to advantage, and bring off slaves cheap, if they are well armed, and keep a good look out; for they are frequently cut off by the natives

on

on their return ; spirited up by the fugitive Portugueze, and often by deserters from our own ships, which inconvenience a method might be pointed out to put a stop to. There is another river adjoining, called the river St. Ann, in which considerable quantities of rice and some negroes may be had.

About thirty leagues south east is Cutcheo, a Portugueze settlement, and twenty-five leagues further on, another called Bisseaux belonging to the same people, whose indolence makes them rather take a profit for letting others trade, than put themselves to the fatigue of it.

There are several other small Portugueze settlements, and one of some note at Mitomba, a river in Sierra Leon, latitude $8\frac{1}{2}$ degrees north. The people, here called Portugueze, are principally persons bred from a mixture of the first Portugueze discoverers with the natives, and now become in their complexion, and woolly quality of the hair, perfect negroes, retaining however a smattering of the Portugueze language.

In the river Sierra Leon is an English settlement, called Bance island, but under the direction of private persons with exclusive privileges.

Some trade is still carried on at Sherbro river, where there are the ruins of an English fort.

Cape Mount lies nearly in seven degrees north latitude, and terminates the Portugueze trade of Sierra Leon. The negroes on the south side of Cape Mount cannot deal with those

those on the north, as they have a different language, religion and customs.

The following places of trade and some others of less note lie between Cape Mount and Cape Palmas; the river St. Pauls, Cape Mensurado, river Junk, river Sestos and Ceteracrue.

Cape Palmas is about twenty leagues to the southward of Ceteracrue, where a great plenty of Malaguetta pepper, rice and ivory, may be annually purchased. The grain coast begins at Cape Mount, and ends here. The sea coast between Cape Mount and this place is about sixty leagues, where are negroes in tolerable plenty; the inhabitants are quiet, the inland country unknown to Europeans, as indeed is the whole of the interior parts of Africa, except part of Angola in the hands of the Portuguese.

Between this and Cape Lahue are the rivers Cavalle, Durin and the river St. Andrews, where the inhabitants are treacherous, but deal considerably in slaves and ivory.

Cape Lahue is about thirty leagues to the eastward of St. Andrews, where the Dutch buy great quantities of gold and ivory: the negroes are subject to a sleepy disease. The ivory coast begins at the river Cavalle and ends at Cape Lahue.

Bassam and Affinee are, the former about twenty leagues, the latter thirty-two to the eastward of Cape Lahue, where good negroes, and large quantities of gold and ivory are purchased by the Dutch; and even the English are obliged to give those articles to the Dutch general at Elmina, for
Brazil

Brazil tobacco, which he illegally monopolizes from the Portugueze, contrary to treaty between the United Provinces and Portugal in 1641.

We are now come to Cape Appolonia, which terminates the windward coast, and may be called the beginning of the Gold coast, since the committee have erected a fort there, and have in all between this place and the river Lagos, which terminates the Gold coast, eleven forts, Cape Appolonia, Dixcove, Sucondée, Commenda, Cape Coast Castle, Annamaboe, Tantumquerry, Winnebah, Accra, Prampram and Whidah.

This part of the coast, called the Gold coast, has been deemed of such importance to England, that since the decline of the African company, the parliament has allowed from ten to thirteen thousand pounds a year for the support of the forts, and added two thousand extra this year. This is entirely under the management of what is called the African committee, but it may be added mistakenly called so, as by indirect practices the real African traders have no effectual influence in their choice.

There are also within this space several Dutch forts and some Danish; the principal Dutch fort is St. George del Mina.

The English forts are poorly kept up; but this is reserved for a farther discussion, when the conduct of the committee falls under consideration.

At Whidah, the English, French and Portugueze, have forts within gun shot of each other.

Jacquin about three leagues to the eastward of Whidah and Eppee about eight leagues, great marts for negroes, gold and Brazil tobacco, are now monopolized by the Dutch.

The river Lagos terminates the Gold Coast and begins what is called the Bite, which ends at Cape Lopez.

The river Benin is forty leagues east of the river Lagos, but between them is no place of trade. The entrance of the river Benin is about half a league wide, but a ship that draws ten feet water cannot enter; and unless you have a pilot well acquainted with the place, if your vessel draws above nine feet, it is dangerous to attempt it; and there are also a savage people called Joes, who sometimes attack small vessels: it is said, that a large shallop may go from hence to Bonny, new and old Calabar rivers, which are about ninety leagues by sea, to the eastward of the river Benin by an inland navigation, and also to the river Lagos to the westward, but it has never yet been attempted.

Cape Formosa is about fifty leagues S. E. of Benin. All the inland trade goes to Benin and Bonny rivers. New Calabar and Bonny rivers are about thirty leagues to the eastward of Cape Formosa, where large ships may go in and purchase negroes and ivory. The going in and coming out * are both attended with danger.

Old Calabar river is about twenty leagues to the eastward of Bonny, where negroes and ivory are purchased and large ships may go in, but the inhabitants, having removed their town from the shore farther inland, often make exorbitant

* See letter (F) in the Appendix.

demands and keep the captains prisoners, till they comply with them.

The river Cameron is about thirty leagues to the south of Old Calabar, but is frequented only by vessels of about one hundred and fifty tons burthen.

The river Gaboon is about eighty leagues to the southward of the river Cameron, navigable for large vessels four leagues up to Parrot Island, where they may be careened and repaired. The Dutch carry on the trade for negroes, wax, ivory, ebony and dyeing woods from several small rivers to the north of this place down to Cape Lopez, which is about thirty leagues to the southward of it, and where what is called the Bite ends.

Cape Lopez furnishes the same commodities, but the trade of it is chiefly engrossed by the Dutch, who often buy negroes here and carry them to the Portuguese at St. Thomas's island, where for dispatch they sell them at 8l. a head.

Majumba is about seventy leagues S. S. E. of Cape Lopez, where a great deal of redwood is annually purchased, though but few slaves and very little ivory.

Loango is about thirty leagues to the southward of Majumba, where the French purchase more negroes than both the English and Dutch together, and where they are to be had in great plenty.

Malemba is about thirty leagues to the southward of Loango; and Cabenda is about seven leagues to the southward of Malemba, where the trade is in the same state as at Loango.

The

The late English African company had a fort at Cabenda, destroyed by the Portuguese in 1723; but great part of the walls and mote round it still remain, and the natives acknowledge the ground the fort stood on, and the land round it within cannon-shot, to belong to the English.

The river Congo is about ten leagues to the southward of Cabenda, peopled on the north side with inoffensive, on the south with piratical negroes, who often cut off ship's boats, and are therefore not much resorted to.

To the southward of this river no trade is carried on by any Europeans, but the Portuguese; who have a large city at Loango St. Paul's on the coast of Angola, strongly fortified, in about nine degrees south latitude; from which place they have penetrated quite through the country to their settlements at, and south of Mozambique upon the eastern coast of Africa, where they have caravans constantly going and returning, and by that means carry on an extensive and advantageous inland commerce.

From this place to the Cape of Good Hope, being a sea-coast of about seven hundred leagues, is but little known; and the few ships, who have attempted to make discoveries, or commence a trade any where near the Cape, have been driven off the coast by the ships of the East India company, under pretence of their encroaching upon their limits; whereas, by the act for extending and improving the trade to Africa, passed in 1749, (the twenty-third of George II.) the limits are expressly declared to be from Port Sallee in Barbary to the Cape of Good Hope, both inclusive; these li-

mits are confirmed by another act in 1751, "together with
 "all the islands adjoining to those coasts, to all regions,
 "territories, and places reputed part of any country within
 "the limits aforesaid." The limits granted by the act to
 settle the trade to Africa in 1697, were "from Cape Blanco
 "to the Cape of Good Hope, both inclusive." The char-
 ter was not granted to the East India company till the year
 after, 1698, and then they were allowed to trade "to all
 "places in Asia, Africa, or America, beyond the Cape of
 "Good Hope to the Streights of Magellan:" so that
 they were never to interfere with any traders on this side of,
 or at, the Cape.

C H A P. IV.

A short HISTORY of the AFRICAN TRADE.

TH E limits of the African trade being so extensive, and
 the advantages resulting from it confessedly so great,
 it is necessary towards fully understanding the subject, as well
 as interesting to future adventurers, to insert a brief account
 of the trade in general, and particularly of those royal African
 companies, which broke one after the other, and the manage-
 ment of their affairs was in 1750 consigned over to the pre-
 sent company, or rather their committee.

The Portuguese first discovered the coast of Africa in
 1482, and built a fort soon after on the island of Arguin,
 and some time after, another at St. George del Mina on the
 Gold Coast, and a third at Loango St. Paul's on the coast of
 Angola.

By virtue of these they claimed and enjoyed for a long time a right to these countries, and confiscated the ships of all other nations that attempted to trade there. No English traders went there till 1544, which was ninety years after, and then at the risk of losing their ships, if taken by the Portuguese: they traded then only for gold, ivory, &c. but not for negroes, the English having then no colonies to employ them in. Queen Elizabeth in 1587, being at war with Spain and Portugal, erected a company with exclusive privileges to trade to Senegal and Gambia for a certain number of years. In the reigns of James I. and Charles I. and during the usurpation, merchants were encouraged to trade to any part of Africa. Accordingly they built a fort at Cormantine on the Gold Coast, and another in the river Gambia.

The Dutch, sensible of the importance of this trade, erected a West India company in 1621, with great privileges and encouragements, and granted them all the lands they could conquer within certain limits in Africa and America. They gained several important conquests in Brazil and Africa, and in 1637 took from the Portuguese the strong fortress of St. George del Mina, and soon after, all their other settlements on the Gold Coast, which were ceded to them by treaty in 1641. Now, though the English had a fort at Cormantine, the Dutch took the advantage of the distracted state of England, to seize and confiscate her ships from Cape Palmas to Cape Lopez. Soon after the restoration Charles II. formed a company to oppose them, remonstrated to the states how unjust their pretensions were, and demanded reparation for the damages

damages his subjects had sustained; but finding this had no effect, he fitted out a strong fleet: then they began a treaty, but in the mean time sent secret orders to their admiral De Ruyter, which he punctually obeyed; proceeded down the African Coast, confiscated all the English vessels he met with, took the fort at Cormantine, and put a Dutch garrison in it. These wrongs and dishonours, meeting with no redress, occasioned war to be proclaimed against the Dutch in 1664, which shews the value they then set on the African trade, when they rather chose to risk a war with England, than admit her to any share of it. In 1667 a peace was concluded, and the English Royal African company had Cape Coast Castle instead of their fort at Cormantine, which was left in possession of the Dutch. The great charges the English company had been at, were said to prevent their trade from succeeding to their wishes; so they assigned over all their rights and possessions to a New Royal African company, established in 1672, and the king granted them all places in Africa from Port Sallee in Barbary, to the Cape of Good Hope, inclusive, for the term of one thousand years, with the sole right of trade. The Dutch were now in possession of St. George del Mina, and several other forts on the Gold Coast. The English, to strengthen themselves, increased their fort at Cape Coast Castle, and built others at Accra, Dixcove, Winnebah, Succondee, Commenda, Annamaboe and Whidah.

The French Senegal company was established in 1673, and in 1678 the French took Arguin and Goree from the

Dutch,

Dutch, which were afterwards ceded to them. In 1685 the French king erected another company to trade from Sierra Leon to the Cape of Good Hope, restraining the former company within Cape Blanco and Sierra Leon. In 1702 the latter of these French African companies had the contract for furnishing the Spanish West Indies with so many slaves yearly, which being transferred to Great Britain in 1713, the French company was abolished and the trade laid open to all their subjects. The English company had sustained many losses from the French and Dutch encroachments, and in 1695 their fort in the river Gambia was taken by the French, who after the peace claimed an equal right in that river with the English.

In 1697 the parliament laid the African trade open, and imposed a tax for the support of the forts, which act remained in force till 1712, though the tax would by no means defray the necessary expences. Since that time the trade has been free and open to all British subjects; for, the company failing, government, in 1730, allowed ten thousand pounds to support the forts, which were unanimously declared absolutely necessary for the preservation of the African trade: the same sum, and frequently more, has since that been annually allowed by government, and in 1749 and the two following years the claims of the Royal African Company were enquired into, satisfaction made to them for all their effects, and those effects and the forts vested in the company of merchants trading to Africa, under the direction of a committee, who were not allowed to trade in their joint capacity (nor perhaps should

should have been in their separate) nor officers or servants in Africa to export negroes on their own account. They have been allowed annually 13,000*l.* for the support of the forts, besides frequent grants of sums which they petitioned for; and this very year 2,000*l.* extra. In 1763 Senegal and its dependencies were vested in this company, and in 1765 they were divested thereof, and it was vested in his majesty, and the trade laid open to all his majesty's subjects, in which state it now continues; that is, the whole trade from Port Sallee in Barbary to the Cape of Good Hope, both inclusive, is free for all his majesty's subjects; but that part of it from Port Sallee to Cape Rouge, under the direction of government; and the part from Cape Rouge to the Cape of Good Hope, wherever there are forts, under the direction of the committee: and as they have forts on the Gold Coast only, their attention is confined to that valuable spot.

C H A P. V.

The CONDUCT *of the present* AFRICAN COMMITTEE.

FROM the foregoing brief account of the African trade, it appears that the carrying it on by an exclusive company has been tried twice without success; it remains now to examine what has been the management of the committee, and whether it improves under their direction.

One observation is necessary to be made; that the influence of the committee at present operating no farther than

than the Gold Coast, they are accountable for the encrease or decrease of trade within those limits only; for want of which plain direction, persons who are but little versed in the African trade are told, with a sort of triumph, of the prodigious encrease of it, and it is held forth as if entirely owing to the direction of the committee. The trade in general indeed is encreased, but that on the Gold Coast considerably diminished, nay almost ruined; for from 1750 to 1763 at least thirteen thousand negroes were annually purchased, but from 1763 to 1770 not above five hundred at Cape Coast Castle, by which we may judge of the rest. In 1752 Liverpool sent thirty-two ships to the Gold Coast for eight thousand two hundred and thirty negroes, and in 1771 only fourteen ships for three thousand four hundred. Some years ago above one hundred thousand ounces of gold were annually brought home from thence by the shipping; but now the committee's servants get all, and that all is a very trifling quantity in comparison of what used to be collected, and the Dutch get most of it for spirits and Brazil tobacco.

But to shew more clearly how far the committee have conformed to the act of parliament that established their power, and how far they have answered or abused the purposes for which they were appointed, it is proper to recur to the plain directions of the act itself. The act passed in 1749, orders that “the committee-men shall be annually
 “chosen by a majority of the merchants trading to Africa;
 “that they shall not trade in their joint capacity; that the
 “governors of forts shall not ship negroes on their own

“ account; that the forts shall protect, not obstruct, the
 “ private traders, and that the buildings shall be publick
 “ warehouses for the service of the community and the
 “ protection of their effects.”

With respect to the manner of choosing committee-men, designing and interested persons, who had been chosen, availed themselves of a casual expression in the act, “ committee-men shall be chosen by persons trading or intending
 “ to trade to Africa,” to make that office perpetual, which the legislature intended to be annual. The electors being composed of all such persons who paid forty shillings for their freedom in the company, these designing men made numbers free * without their knowledge or expence, many of the lowest classes of the people, and all of them such as were their friends or dependents. Accordingly these forty shilling voters this last July out-voted the real traders; the poll at the close stood thus, Bourke 573, Beane 512, French 507, Smith 230, Aird 193, Philpot 196, Cleland 91.— Smith, Aird and Philpot were nominated and supported by the traders. Bourke united his interest with French and Beane, two of the persons in the combination, and stood upon that interest, and that of Ross and Mill, the latter of whom has a brother governor of Cape Coast Castle. By these means they are self-chosen, and consequently independent of the real African merchants, unattentive to the publick good, and industrious only to raise fortunes for themselves, by means of that publick money annually al-

* See letter [G.] in the appendix for Beane and French's agreement, &c.

lowed them for the general advantage of the whole trade. They make their own dependents the governors of the forts, and carry on their trade by their means, either evading or boldly acting in defiance of the laws of their country; and having the advantage of house and warehouse room, their servants abroad and freight of their goods out at the publick expence, can afford to overbid the private traders: this naturally raises a competition; the African articles of trade are enhanced, and the value of their own commodities lessened: and this has still worse consequences; for if the Africans can have what they want for less of their articles than usual, they will bring the fewer to market, as they are indolent in their dispositions, and crafty in their dealings, and know very well how to take the advantage of our mismanagement.

The governors of the forts though to appearance forbid to ship off slaves for their own use on pain of dismissal, yet knowing they can depend on the committee-men for their protection, as they are secretly interested in their trade, do it clandestinely; and when they leave the Coast, always take care to have a noble cargo of the very best negroes to carry with them. The poor soldiers are obliged to do all their work and labour for them, though miserably supplied, at the dearest rates, with the common necessaries of life. The forts are merely an heap of rubbish, overrun with filth and vermin, so far from being capable of awing the natives, that they cannot protect themselves; so that for the advantage of their private trade, the governors are generally tributary to

one, and sometimes several of the African chiefs : by which means not only the rights of the English have been given up, but the very governors themselves have been flogged by the negroes in their own forts. Is it to be supposed, that the dignity of the British empire can be supported by those, who through private interest tamely submit to such insolent treatment ? Or can they protect the traders, who are in such abject subjection themselves ? Accordingly every trader finds he has only himself to depend upon, is obliged to find room where he can for his goods, and thinks himself happily off, if the governor of the fort does not openly prevent his trading. This is too common a case, and passes not only uncensured, but is often rewarded by the committee. Mr. Miles, governor of fort * Appolonia, not only prevented several captains from trading there, but publicly declared he would not permit one of them to purchase even an ounce of gold. An affidavit being made of this he was recalled, but is now by the favour of the committee reinstated in his government, and gone again to take possession of that fort, in which he behaved in defiance of an absolute act of parliament, and to the detriment of the fair trader, whom by his duty he was bound to assist. A ship of Mr. Mill's, one of the committee, carried him out this last August, and he will doubtless be true to his benefactor's interest, and act as he did before. This is the way indeed to encrease the spirit of trade in the
governors

* This fort itself was not only unnecessary, but disadvantageous, having the worst landing place on the Coast ; and indeed of the eleven forts at least six may be dispensed with, and the remaining five answer every proper purpose, for at present they are merely factories to Cape Coast Castle and Annamaboe.

governors of the forts ; though some have by no means been so deficient as to want any encouragement, for they have carried it so far as to trade with the French and the Dutch, when they could reap any advantage by it, in preference to their own countrymen, and to dispose of their gunpowder, till they had none left to defend themselves. Dixcove in 1750 by this means was reduced so that it must have been taken by the Dutch, had not a French vessel come in with an Irish captain, who afforded them a supply.

In short, the committee have in every particular acted directly contrary to the trust reposed in them, and contrary to the true interest of the nation : and must, if continued, entirely destroy that trade on the Gold Coast, which has been ever judged the most important of any on the whole coast of Africa, and consequently most essentially necessary to the prosperity of the British commerce, and the support of her Colonies.

From this account of the present management of the committee on the Gold Coast, where only their jurisdiction operates through their trusty factors, the governors of the forts, it is very clear that nothing has preserved them from the censure of the legislature, but these facts not having appeared properly before the government. The length of time before complaints can be heard, the deaths of the injured persons, the evasions of their oppressors, the fortunes they have raised as bulwarks round them, there being no magistrate on the Coast to take cognizance of crimes, or administer affidavits, and many other accidents contribute to confuse, if not totally stifle the truth. It has
now

now appeared pretty plain though by no means exaggerated, as will be manifest from the many stubborn evidences of obstinate facts in the Appendix, at the letter [H.] and may be further proved by the united testimony of many witnesses of reputation now in England, and ready to declare the whole truth, when properly called upon to do so.

As at the beginning of this enquiry into the management of the committee, an observation was made, that the encrease of the African trade in general was held forth by their adherents, as their sole merit, though that under their particular care languishes daily; so here a distinction of a similar nature arises: "Forts, say they, must be supported, for without them we could have no trade: now we support the forts, and therefore support your trade there." This specious plea like the former soon falls to the ground on the bare approach of real information and common understanding. It has indeed been the universal maxim of the British legislature, and the unanimous desire of the merchants, that forts and castles should be kept up in those parts of Africa, where other nations have forts, but it was always added *on a respectable footing, and for the benefit and protection of the free traders.* The deficiency in the first particular is abundantly a sufficient plea to take them out of those hands, in which they are contemptible; especially when instead of answering the second requisite, they are evidently injurious to it. Yet whenever the committee has been censured, the necessity of forts, and the general encrease of the African trade have been two points, that have been harangued upon with a sort of

of triumph ; as if neither forts or trade could subsist without them, though they are daily degrading the former and distressing the latter.

If I am apprehensive of an attack, I wear a sword, as a necessary weapon for my defence ; and where I expect several antagonists, I should be glad my servant had another ; but I should be mad to have my own so rusty in the scabbard that it could not be drawn ; or to trust him with one, if I not only suspected but knew he would turn its point against me instead of my assailants.

C H A P. VI.

Proposals for IMPROVING the AFRICAN TRADE.

IT remains now to point out some remedy for the abuses of the present manner of management, and for the inconveniencies the African trade labours under from it.

All companies are and must necessarily be composed of individuals, who from obvious motives pursue interests distinct from and often in opposition to those of the company they belong to : hence it is that we so often see rich directors and bankrupt companies ; and therefore such bankruptcies are not to be imputed to the trade itself, but to some wrong first principle of, or to the improper measures pursued in, the management of it. The failure of two African companies, though composed of the richest and most powerful members of the state, plainly shews that the attempt of monopolies on so extensive a coast, among inhabitants

habitants of so many different nations, laws and customs, and consequently of as many various interests and inclinations, cannot possibly be attended with success. The foundation being defective, no solid superstructure could be built upon it; for had it miscarried solely from errors in the management, the second company had their predecessors example to guide them to the acquiring all their advantages, and to enable them to see their mistakes, and to steer clear of those shelves on which they were wreckt: but with all these lights, with all the power of the legislature to assist, and the profits of trade to support them, they were incapable of paying their debts. As to the management of their successors then, what has the nation to expect from that? the present committee is not only a monopoly, but one of the most detrimental sort: other monopolies are supported at the expence of the monopolists; this at the expence of the publick, to the manifest injury, if not the utter ruin of the free trader; for if they are continued in power, that consequence must naturally ensue. A private merchant may sometimes monopolize a trade, and that undoubtedly is an injury to the publick; but it can be only a transient injury, as there are three things, any of which must inevitably soon put a stop to it; his death, his bankruptcy, or his making a sufficient fortune: the first must happen in a course of years; the second often attends unfair attempts; the third follows from superior address, or good luck in the trade wherein he engages. Here are three chances to terminate his views; but in a monopoly supported by the publick, these chances are all

all cut off. The committee can never die; one wave succeeds another, and their followers roll on into the places of their predecessors; they in a collective capacity can only break when they have broke the publick that supported them; and a succession of hungry applicants are ever infatiable from their first dependency to their plenitude of power.

Various have been the attempts to reform the abuses of the committee, but they have all been fruitless; for the legislature having forged the chain, a power only equal to theirs can break it: and that is sincerely to be wished, for nothing but an entire alteration of the present management can put the African trade on a respectable footing. This is no scratch, easily to be healed, as one of their servants asserted, but the whole limb is rotten, and must be lopped off, or a mortification must ensue, and perhaps reach the vitals of our country. From a monopoly no encrease of trade can be expected, and were they once invested with extraordinary powers, and possessed of great opulence, all this would only raise their views to easier methods of encreasing their revenues. Under the pretence of investigating further sources of commerce in the interior parts of Africa, they would be aiming at territorial acquisitions, which might raise them for a time, but the natives and their country would soon have their revenge, as their total ruin would be the almost immediate consequence.

By our shipping therefore is our only eligible method of carrying on this trade, free to all our industrious natives: The sea

is the only element for Britons, and that makes all the coasts their own, whenever they choose to claim them. The forts that are necessary may be garrisoned with military gentlemen, appointed by the company, or a committee fairly chosen by real African traders, and afterwards confirmed by government: Let them have ample salaries, but under a total prohibition of entering into any trade whatsoever, either on shore or on board, which will make them impartial judges of any difference that may arise between the traders and natives, and by that means they may restore the rights, the honour and dignity of the British name. Let their appointment be for three years only, and though this establishment would be expensive, yet the saving that might be made to the publick by taking off improper perquisites, and lessening the number of forts, would rather reduce than encrease the expences in general, especially after the first necessary charges were provided for; that is, when five of those now ruinous forts, which are as many as need be kept up, were properly repaired under the inspection of an engineer; for dear experience has taught us what it is to leave it to the discretion of a governor. One fort with another might be maintained for about 1,000l. a year, as that calculation was made for Annamaboe. The committee with eleven forts have had yearly about 2,000l. more than that for these twelve years past; so doubtless they have a considerable sum in their hands, which they will account for to the publick, and for which and all other deficiencies whatsoever, according to the preamble of the last general African act,

act, I apprehend all the members of the company are jointly and severally accountable.

The same sum government now allows would pay all expences, and afford to fix the governor of Cape Coast's salary* at 1,000l. with 300l. yearly for his table, and each other governor's at 500l. And how many half-pay officers would be happy to go a three years tour on such conditions ! The only forts that need be † kept up, are the five following, Dixcove, Cape Coast Castle, Annamaboe, Winnebah and Accra ; for Appolonia and Whidah are evidently injurious, and the rest unnecessary to the trade : and as to numerous forts to trade at, the British ships supply their places. They are now in such numbers on that Coast, that there can scarce be produced a single instance of any considerable mart, where there have not constantly been two or three, and frequently ten, twelve and fourteen : and this superiority in shipping, added to a superiority also in our assortment for trade, will always prevail with the natives, and enable us to out-do either French or Dutch, especially if we carefully prohibit all contracts with French vessels for negroes to be delivered to them in Africa ; which gives them an opportunity to lie upon the Coast, to acquaint themselves with that and the trade, and then supplant us by their suppleness and dexterity.

* The governor of Cape Coast has now as good as 2000l. per ann. exclusive of trade ; and one governor in two years only carried home 12,000l. though he did not sell five hundred slaves to the shipping.

† Perhaps the same money might afford to settle a fort at Sierra Leon, according to a proposal at letter [H.] in the appendix.

The advantages the shipping would enjoy from the competition between them and the forts ceasing, would mutually establish a friendship and respect between them : When they ceased to be rivals, they would naturally be brothers. Accommodations, protection, and every intercourse of kindness would arise, and the natives be kept in awe, when they found the English were unanimous : justice and protection are all the negroes wish for, and under such a government they might be secure of both. Some negroes of other nations might be trained to arms, who could be more useful in guarding the private traders in the towns, than European soldiers, and would be faithful with kind usage, and could not be injured by their being exposed to the climate. The honour and justice of sentiment, that military ardor inspires, especially in the early part of life--the hopes of preferment, which government would readily grant, if requested by the African company for an officer, who had behaved with unspotted integrity abroad--the applause of the world, and friendship of the merchants, are no small security for the good behaviour of the military gentlemen : and were even these motives insufficient, the short time they would stay upon the Coast, would make it hardly possible, or worth while for them to form connections which must so soon be broke through.

Should they notwithstanding act wrong, a colony upon the Coast would be the proper and effectual remedy ; but if that was not thought expedient, or too expensive, the next eligible step is, that a fifty or sixty gun ship and a frigate or two,

with sensible steady officers, and a man of reputation in the law as judge, might call at every place of trade on the Coast, and do the natives justice, if ill treated by the English there; or exact it of them, if they were the offenders. This course steadily pursued with a prohibition of any gratuity being received, or any trade carried on by the judge, or commanders and officers under severe penalties, would retrieve the national character of justice and power; and the natives of Africa, when sure of not being injured, would not be inclinable to commit any injury.

C H A P. VII.

A new AFRICAN ACT proposed.

TO bring all these regulations to a point, the best way seems to throw them together into one view, in the form of an Act of Parliament, which properly executed might remedy every abuse, and set the African trade on a fair and respectable footing, humane and equitable to the Africans, advantageous to every private free British trader, and conducive to the prosperity of our commerce, the benefit and support of our colonies.

An act of parliament passed in the* --- year of his majesty king George the Third, for the regulation and encouragement

* All dates and sums printed in Italick are humbly submitted, as is the whole of this act, to consideration of government.

ment of the British trade to Africa, and for the advantage of the British commerce and colonies.

Whereas, by an act passed in the twenty-third year of his late Majesty, entitled “ an act for extending and improving “ the trade to Africa,” it was enacted, that, “ all his Majesty’s subjects shall be free to trade from Port Sallee in “ Barbary, to the Cape of Good Hope, both inclusive, and “ that all his Majesty’s subjects trading to or from Africa between Cape Blanco and the Cape of Good Hope, should “ for ever thereafter be a body corporate and politic, by the “ name of The Company of Merchants trading to Africa ; “ and that any of his Majesty’s subjects trading or intending to “ trade to Africa, upon payment of the sum of forty-shillings “ each, should have right to vote for the committee-men “ of the said company, in manner and form as is by said “ act directed :” **And Whereas**, a great number of persons,

neither trading nor intending to trade to or from Africa, have become freemen of the said company, and have thereby obtained a very extensive and undue influence in the elections of committee-men thereof, contrary to the true intent and meaning of the said act ; and have rendered the said committee-men, and the governors of forts and other officers employed by or under the said company, less dependent upon the real traders to and from Africa free of the said company, than of right and for the interest and welfare of the trade to and from Africa they ought to be, **For remedy** of such abuse, and of the evil consequences that have proceeded from it, and for prevention of the like in future, and for the bet-

ter regulation of the said company, their committee-men and officers of what rank and degree soever ;

Be it enacted, and it is hereby enacted, by the king's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons in this present parliament assembled, that so much of the said act or of any other act, that may stand in contradiction to this act, be repealed, annulled and made void, and is hereby repealed, annulled and made void ; and that any new regulations in this act shall be established, and in force from and after the respective dates hereafter to be set forth.

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that of the persons, who now are or may hereafter become freemen of the said company, only such shall have right to be permitted to vote for or in the choice of a committee-man or committee-men of the said company, who were at the time of their admission to the freedom thereof, or at some time thereafter, actually and *bonâ fide* for their own account, and not for that of any other person, in some one ship or vessel, and her cargoe employed in trading to or from the Coast of Africa within the limits aforesaid, interested as owners thereof, and to retain for their use, and to bear finally the profit and loss thereupon, in the full proportion of such sum to the whole of the adventure, to the amount of 500l. or upwards ; and who shall give in an account in writing at the office or chamber of the said company to which they shall or may respectively belong, at London, Bristol or Liverpool, signed with their names, and
in

in their proper hand writing, in the presence of two lawful witnesses, on or before the last day of *April* 1773, or at the time of their desiring to become freemen of the said company, if after that date, setting forth the year, name of the ship, master and owners, and to what part of Africa such their adventure was or is: **And be it enacted** by the authority aforesaid, that any and every freeman of the said company being so qualified, and having given in such account on or before the last day of *April* 1773, and such only shall have right and be permitted to vote for any committee-man or committee-men to be chosen at any time thereafter; but it shall not be permitted to any freeman of the said company, admitted to the freedom thereof after that day, to vote for or in the choice of any committee-man or committee-men, until he shall have been free of the said company one entire year.

And for as much as the Province of Senegambia is under the immediate direction of government, and Bance island on the river of Sierra Leon, was vested by an act passed in the twenty-fifth year of his late majesty in particular persons, and that the said company have not nor ought to have any authority or cognizance in or of the same, it is hereby declared, that the being owner or interested in any ship or vessel employed in trading to any amount or value whatsoever to or from both or either of those places shall not give any qualification to, or enable any person to vote for any committee-man or committee-men of the said company until both

both or either of those places shall or may by law of parliament be put under direction of the said company.

And the better to prevent any fraud, collusion or misrepresentation of any person made free, or desiring to be made free of the said company, or in the election of a committee-man or committee-men thereof, in the account to be delivered in writing, as herein before directed, **It is enacted** by the authority aforesaid, that if any person now free of the said company, or that shall hereafter be made free thereof, shall not be actually, truly and *bonâ fide* interested as to profit and loss, in the manner and to the full extent as shall be in such account set forth, without any indemnity as to the same, or any part thereof, from any person or persons whomsoever, such persons made free, or desiring to be made free, shall for every such offence, as well as for every time he shall presume to vote for a committee-man or committee-men of the said company, forfeit the sum of 500l. to be recovered in manner as by the said act of the twenty-third of his late majesty is directed in the clause for recovering of penalties; and to be applied, one moiety thereof to the person who shall sue for the same, the other moiety for and towards the maintaining the forts and settlements under the direction of the said company :

And it is also hereby enacted, the more to facilitate the effectual punishment of the frauds, collusions or misrepresentations aforesaid; that the *onus probandi* shall lay on the person or persons against whom such accusation

shall be, and not upon the person accusing him or suing for the same.

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall not be permitted to the committee-men to contract debts to or with any governor or servant of the company aforesaid, or for any greater amount, or other purposes than those for which the annual supply is granted by parliament; and that if any governor, officer, or servant of the said company shall advance any sum or sums for the use of the said company, beyond what the said annual supply shall without any anticipation be able to discharge, and be directed by the committee to be so supplied for the service of the current year, the same shall be irrecoverably forfeited and lost.

And whereas it is highly necessary for the good and welfare of the African trade, that the governors, chiefs or other servants, appointed or to be appointed by the committee-men of the said company, should not be connected in any way or manner whatsoever with any of the said committee-men, other than simply and distinctly as servants of the company, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall not be lawful for any committee-man of the said company during the exercise or possession of such office, by himself or in partnership, by means of any third person, or in any other way whatsoever, upon his or their own account, or upon commission, or by way of agency, directly or indirectly to ship goods, or charter vessels, or in any wise trade or have commerce with or for

any

any governor, chief, or other servant employed by or under the said company, on pain of forfeiting for every and each offence the full sum of 1,000*l.* to be recovered and applied as heretofore mentioned.

And for the more effectual preventing the governors of the forts from all manner of trade whatsoever, and for the encouragement of the shipping, by cutting off all possibility of competition between them and the forts, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the governors of the forts shall be gentlemen bearing his majesty's commission in the army or marine forces, and being on half-pay: and that if they trade themselves, or permit any person whatsoever in or out of the fort or forts under their command, on board or on shore, directly or indirectly to trade for them, they shall *ipso facto* be deprived of their command, sent home, and rendered for ever incapable of serving his majesty or the company in any capacity whatsoever, over and above other penalties hereafter to be set forth by this act.

And for the better encouragement of such gentlemen, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the governor of Cape Coast Castle shall have 1,000*l.* *per annum* salary, and be allowed 300*l.* for a table for himself, a commissioned officer as lieutenant, and a surgeon to be appointed under him, which said lieutenant shall have 400*l.* *per annum* salary, and the surgeon 300*l.*: And that the said governor shall be commander in chief of all his majesty's forts upon the Gold Coast, and between Cape Blanco and the

the Cape of Good Hope, and shall be moreover vested with the powers of a justice of peace, to enable him to take affidavits and redress small complaints, as well as give him the greater weight in adjusting all disputes that may arise between the shipping and the natives ; for his good and upright behaviour wherein he shall be accountable to further enquiry : and that the forts called Dixcove, Annamaboe, Winnebah and Accra, shall also each have a commissioned officer, in the army or marine forces, being on halfpay, as governor, with a salary to each of 500*l. per annum*, and shall be subject to such orders as they shall receive from the governor of Cape Coast Castle, and that they, as well as the governor of Cape Coast Castle, shall have a competent number of subaltern officers and private men under them, to render them independent of the natives, and capable of protecting the trade.

And that these governors, though bearing his Majesty's commission, may also be properly dependent on the committee and company of merchants trading to Africa, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that they shall be appointed by the said company of Merchants at a general meeting to be ordered by the committee, giving a fortnight's notice in the Gazette, and shall then be confirmed by government for such time only as they shall act conformably to their instructions, and for the benefit of trade ; and that no commission, for any governor or other officers, shall exceed the space of three years ; though to encourage the governors of the inferior forts, and the lieutenant of Cape Coast Castle, one of them shall have the preference.

ference of succeeding to the command thereof, on the return of the governor to England, or his otherwise vacating his government ; which succession, when there are more competitors than one, shall be decided by the judge and commissioned officers of the yearly ships, (hereafter to be mentioned) in consideration of the intelligence they may receive on the spot, relative to their former good behaviour.

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the other six forts upon the Gold Coast, having some of them been found injurious to trade and the others unnecessary, shall be no longer provided for, but marks of possession with the English arms shall be left, and their stores, and whatever else may be useful conveyed to some of the five remaining forts, which may stand most in need of them ; which, together with the repair of the said remaining forts, shall be done under the direction and by the orders of an engineer or engineers, to be sent out expressly for that purpose ; and that no governor shall interfere with, or have any hand in repairing or making any alterations in the fort under his command, upon pain of suspension.

And whereas, though it was enjoined and directed, by an act passed in the fifth year of his present majesty, entitled, “ An act for repealing the act vesting the fort of Senegal “ and it’s dependencies, in the company of merchants trading to Africa, &c. &c.” that all the forts, warehouses, and buildings under the direction of the said company, should be free and open to all his Majesty’s subjects, for protection of their persons and property to a certain extent, and that
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it should not be lawful for any officer or servant employed by the committee of the said company, to export negroes from Africa upon their own account, upon pain of dismissal from the service of the said company, yet it has been justly complained of, that the said officers or some of them, contrary to their duty and the intention of parliament, have, under various frivolous pretexs, refused the traders to Africa that protection for their persons and property, that of right they ought chearfully and readily to have granted ; and also, that such officers employed by the committee, contrary to the injunction aforesaid, have shipped off, and exported considerable numbers of negroes from the coast of Africa : **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall not be lawful for any governor, chief or other officer or servant employed by or under the committee, to refuse the use of any warehouse, room, or other place in any of the forts under the direction of the said company to any British subject, whensoever he shall ask it for preservation or defence of his person or property, in case of any dispute between such British subject and the natives of Africa, or apprehension of an enemy, for any reasonable time that he shall desire. And any governor or officer, or other servant of the said company, delaying or refusing such use of the forts, or to give a receipt for the said goods or any or all protection that in his power may lie to the subjects of Great Britain, shall be dismissed from the service of the said company, and if a commissioned officer rendered for ever incapable of serving his majesty or the company in any capacity

capacity whatsoever: and any governor, officer, or servant employed by or under the said company, shipping off negroes upon his own account, as the effects of persons deceased, or upon any other account whatsoever, shall forfeit his property in the same, one half to the person who shall inform thereof, the other half to the master of the vessel, in which the same shall be shipped; and the governor, officer or servant so offending be dismissed from the service of the said company, and be rendered incapable, if a commissioned officer, of ever serving his majesty or the company in any capacity whatsoever.

And whereas the legality of the said trade to Africa for negroes has been disputed, notwithstanding custom almost immemorial, and many acts of parliament for the extending, improving and encouraging thereof, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all his majesty's subjects are free, and have a legal right to purchase negroe slaves from Port Sallee in Barbary to the Cape of Good Hope, both inclusive, and to sell the same in the colonies, whether West India Islands or North America, or the seas thereto adjoining; and that the purchasers thereof have a property in them, and a right to their labour and produce, they always allowing them proper cloathing and maintenance:

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said negroes shall be secure in their lives and limbs, and that if any planter or other of his majesty's free subjects, through wanton cruelty, maims a negro or defaces him, or causes him to be maimed or defaced, such
negro

negro shall be free; and if the said negro dies, the person who was the cause thereof shall be accountable to the laws, as for the loss of any other of his majesty's subjects: and if it appears to any of his majesty's governors or magistrates abroad, that any planter withholds from his negroes proper cloathing and sufficient maintenance, for the first offence he shall suffer a fine at the discretion of such magistrate, but not exceeding 20l. and for the second conviction, double, and so on *toties quoties*, until he gives them their proper allowance, such as may be settled by the laws of the colony; and that on the other hand, negroes convicted of idleness, neglecting their master's business, or absenting themselves from their service, shall be liable to such pains and punishments as the laws of the colony shall inflict; provided always that the magistrates, not planters, shall order and inflict all punishments for offences deemed deserving severity beyond what the planters shall have the power of ordering, which shall never exceed forty stripes, under penalty of 50l. to be forfeited to the magistrate of the place.

And Whereas many negroes have been brought into England to the detriment of the Colonies and encrease of idle servants here, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that from and after the *first* day of *July* next ensuing whatsoever subject of Great Britain shall import a negroe here, shall attend immediately at the Custom-house, pay a duty of 10l. a head for every negroe so imported, and give in such negroe's free consent and agreement, signed by him or her voluntarily, to return from whence he or she came, within

within the space of two years; and shall give a bond of 50l. to government for such negroe's return within such time, and to produce a certificate thereof under pain of forfeiting the said bond, in which two reputable housekeepers shall also be joined with the importer, and all three jointly and severally shall be liable to the same: and whatsoever subject of Great Britain shall import a negroe without conforming to the above directions, shall forfeit 100l. for every negroe so imported, half to the person who sues for the same, and half to the use of his majesty; and the negroe shall be free: Excepting always such negroes as may be hired to assist in bringing a ship home, who shall be restored to their owners' estates abroad and sent back by the first opportunity.

And to prevent frauds and collusions by such negroes being called free, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that whatsoever negroe comes, or is brought here under that denomination after the said *first* day of *July* next ensuing, shall pay 50l. at the custom house, to be restored for his or her use on, first, a certificate of his or her sailing from England, and next, another certificate of his or her being landed, and resident in the colonies abroad; and that if any negroe on landing does not comply with the above directions, such negroe so neglecting shall forfeit 100l. or be sent back to the place from whence he or she came; which said 100l. shall be recovered and disposed of as above directed.

And to ensure justice and good usage to the natives of Africa upon their own Coasts, and to deter the masters of

vessels employed in the trade thereto more effectually from using any violence to, or forcibly carrying away any native thereof, whether a freeman or a slave, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that any commander or master of a vessel, that shall by violence or fraud carry away any native of Africa, not purchased in the fair course of that trade, shall, for every native so carried away, forfeit the sum of 100l. if such native be a slave, and 200l. if he or she be free, to be recovered and applied, as before is mentioned; and shall moreover repurchase and restore him or her to his or her own country or owner therein, and produce a certificate thereof, under penalty of never being allowed to sail as captain of any vessel in any trade whatsoever.

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that whatever merchant or master of a vessel, from Great Britain to the colonies, shall, by contract made in Europe or America, agree to furnish any French ship on the coast of Africa with negroes, shall forfeit treble the value of such negroes so disposed of, one third to the person who sues for the same, one third for the maintenance of the forts, and one third for the use of his majesty.

And whereas an inhibition lies against some articles of trade, necessary for the coast of Africa, going out in small vessels, which sort of vessels are absolutely requisite for many rivers, which will not admit large ones, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that vessels of any size shall be allowed to ship rum, tobacco, teas, and spirits
with

with the usual drawbacks, upon the owner and master giving bond that the said vessel is intended for the coast of Africa, naming the port she is bound to, and engaging under proper penalties, that no part or parcel shall be relanded in Europe: **And be it enacted**, also that all vessels trading to the river Gambia, shall be allowed to carry out such a quantity of crewels, as shall be necessary to make up their assortment, on giving bond, that the said crewels are for such service only, and shall be landed in some town or factory, or otherwise disposed of within the river Gambia; and that so much of a former act of parliament as subjects the owners and masters of ships so destined for Gambia to any loss for having such crewels on board, shall be and is hereby repealed.

And for the better detection of any deceit or imposition in the annual accounts, directed by the act of the twenty-third of his late majesty to be laid before the Curfitor Baron of the Exchequer, the same is hereby ordered to be formed agreeable to the same act, by the committee, within one month from the expiration of their office annually, and then to lie for the remainder of that month, and the space of one month more, open for the inspection and observation of the freemen of the said company at their office in London, immediately after which it is to be laid before a general meeting of the freemen of the said company to be had in London, of which fourteen days notice shall be given in the London Gazette, and such meeting shall not be at any time within one month for the general election of com-

mittee-men of the said company ; and until such meeting the said accounts shall not be deemed to be valid, or be capable of being laid before the Curfitor Baron of the Exchequer.

And to prevent any exaction or collusion by or in any committee-man or officer employed by or under the company aforesaid, from any person appointed by or trafficked with by the said company or committee thereof, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that any committee-man, officer or other servant belonging to the said company, accepting of any money by way of fee, gratuity or reward, otherwise than is by law permitted, shall be for ever incapable of service to, by or under the said company.

And for the better supplying the soldiers and inferior officers employed in the said forts, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said committee, under penalty of fine or dismissal, shall take care that they have at least as ample food, and as proper and wholesome drink and cloathing, suitable for the climate, as any of his majesty's forces stationed abroad ; and shall send such food, drink and cloathing themselves for such purposes, and not leave the same or any part thereof to be furnished by the governors or other officers of the forts in any degree, that can in the nature of things be prevented : and for so much as may remain due or owing to any officer or soldier in the service of the said company after defraying the charge of necessary food and raiment, and deducting such remittances as they may make to their relations or friends in England,

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the said committee-men shall cause the same to be paid to such officers or soldiers in silver specie.

And to the intent that all abuses in the African trade may be effectually and speedily rectified, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that copies of this act shall be immediately sent out to all the governors of the forts on the Gold Coast, and that they, and their officers and servants, be directed to hold themselves in readiness to return to England by the *first* day of *July* next ensuing, under penalty of confiscation of their effects, one half to the captains of men of war sent out with the next governors, according to this act, and the other half for the maintenance of the forts, which are designed to be kept up: and that a general meeting of the African traders, qualified as by this act is directed, on or before the *last* day of *April* next ensuing, shall be held at their chamber in London, on the *second* day of *May* next ensuing, where the intended governors, officers and servants of the five forts of Cape Coast Castle, Dixcove, Annamaboe, Winnebah and Accra shall be elected, and application made to government that a competent number of soldiers be ordered to be got ready with all possible dispatch, and all necessary stores, provisions and instructions sent out with them, so as to reach the Coast by the *third* of *July* next ensuing, that a full and immediate change of men and measures may at once take place in England and Africa; and that with them one or more engineers shall also be sent out, who shall be and are hereby made, subject to the same restrictions as to trade, as the governors

vernors of the forts are by this act declared to be, which engineers shall inspect the said five forts, and give directions for putting them in proper and respectable repair, which directions the said governors shall comply with and not be permitted to make any alterations : And that the said engineers shall receive and transmit home, an account of all the stores and other public effects in the forts, for the improper deficiencies whereof at the time of taking the inventory, the present committee and governors shall be accountable ; as shall every succeeding governor for deficiencies in his time, upon quitting his command and returning to England.

And in aid of the support of the forts and expences hereby incurred, a tax of *one or two shillings* per ton shall be levied on all ships and vessels fitted out from Great Britain or her colonies for the African trade, from and after the *first* day of *January*, 1773.

And that these regulations and all future orders of succeeding committees shall be effectually and constantly complied with, **Be it enacted**, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every September in every succeeding year, a fifty or sixty gun man of war with one or more frigates, and a tender, shall sail from England with a prudent person of reputation learned in the law, who shall act as judge, and the captains and commissioned officers of the said vessels as jury, who shall stop at every place of trade upon the Coast, and hear and redress all grievances and abuses committed by the British subjects against the natives and *vice versa* ; for which purpose they shall be empowered to enter into, and settle

settle treaties with the natives, and that they shall have power to force all offenders to make recompence for offences to the parties injured, and to order or bring such persons home from off the Coast, who shall be guilty of any enormities ; and shall bring back an account of all their transactions, and of complaints against masters of ships, or governors and officers of the company, who shall be proceeded against according to the directions of the committee as authorised by this act : And that upon their return, a frigate shall carry out officers to supply vacancies, or in the room of such as have been brought home, or by their improper behaviour deserved to be superseded ; which frigate shall convoy one or more store ships with such things, not articles of trade, as shall be wanted upon the Coast for the maintenance of the forts, of which there shall constantly in each be at least four months supply.

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all causes heard upon the Coast shall be without any manner of charges upon any pretence whatsoever to either party, and that the judge, officers, secretary or other persons whatsoever, convicted of receiving any fee, gratuity or reward, or of trading in any manner whatsoever, shall be deprived of his office and of one year's salary thereof, and be rendered incapable of ever holding any civil or military office under his majesty for the time to come.

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all other regulations and supplies which the committee shall think requisite, and which shall receive the

approbation of a general meeting of the merchants trading to Africa, free of the said company, though not in this act expressed, shall be settled and provided for; and that these general orders shall have the force of a law, where they are not contrary to the intent and meaning of the legislature, or the general interest and emolument of the African trade.

And be it enacted, and it is enacted by the authority aforesaid, that such parts of this act as have dates affixed to them shall be in force according to such dates, and that the whole of the act shall commence and be in force from and after the *first* day of *July* next ensuing.

C O N C L U S I O N.

I T only remains to be observed, that this Treatise is not the reverie of any one single person, but the joint sentiments of the best writers upon trade, and the result of the united opinions of the most capital merchants to Africa, drawn from their long experience and perfect knowledge of the subject, and collected by

A N A F R I C A N M E R C H A N T.

A P P E N D I X.

A P P E N D I X.

[A.]

THE Importance of the *African Trade* will appear by the following State of it in the Year 1771.

<i>Where gone.</i>	<i>No. of Ships</i>	<i>Number of Negroes.</i>	<i>Under whose Direction.</i>
Senegambia. Cape Blanco to Cape Rouge. }	43	{ 3,310, and 400 Tons of Gum }	Government.
Gold Coast. Cape Apollonia to Lagos. }	29	7,525	Committee.
Windward Coast. Cape Rouge to Cape Apollonia. }	56	11,960	Merchants.
Bite. Lagos to Cape Lopez. }	63	23,301	
Angola. Cape Lopez to Cape of Good Hope. }	4	1,050	
Total	195	47,146	Besides several small Vessels.

Of these 195 Ships, 107 went from *Liverpool* for — 29,250
 58 went from *London* for — 8,136
 25 went from *Bristol* for — 8,810
 5 went from *Lancaster* for — 950 } *Negroes.*

In the Year 1752, 88 Ships went from *England* for 25,920 Negroes.

B

To

To shew the State of the Trade from LIVERPOOL the following Account, from 1709 to 1771, is inserted.

1709	-	-	1	Vessel	1761	69	Vessels
1730	-	-	15	Ditto	1762	61	Ditto
1737	-	-	33	Ditto	1763	74	Ditto
1744	-	-	34	Ditto	1764	74	Ditto
1751	-	-	53	Ditto	1765	80	Ditto and 4 shallops
1752	-	-	58	Ditto	1766	61	Ditto
1753	-	-	73	Ditto	1767	83	Ditto and 3 ditto
1754	-	-	72	Ditto	1768	81	Ditto and 3 ditto
1755	-	-	41	Ditto	1769	96	Ditto
1756	-	-	60	Ditto	1770	96	Ditto
1757	-	-	47	Ditto	1771	113	Ditto, those now fitting out included.
1758	-	-	51	Ditto			
1759	-	-	58	Ditto			
1760	-	-	74	Ditto			

N. B. Authentic lists of these with the names of the commanders and owners are ready for inspection, if desired.

Besides these ships, there go annually from North-America and the West-Indies at least 60 or 70, and they are yearly increasing, and that their numbers now are considerable will appear by a certificate signed by thirteen Captains of vessels in the road of Annamaboo against the governors of the forts, added towards the end of this Appendix, six of whom came from the colonies.

Gold imported from the Gold Coast before the committee's time, was annually from 120,000 to 150,000 ounces; and one year 400,000 guineas were coined from what was brought from thence; besides 150,000 Negroes have been purchased there in a year.

By a calculation of the trade and the ships employed in it, it appears, that at least One Million and an Half of Money is annually remitted to Great-Britain for Negroes, and that the value of other articles imported, as gold, wax, ivory, malaguetta pepper, rice, ebony, redwood, and other dyeing woods, amounts to at least half a million more; so that two millions of money is brought home by this trade in its present state,

state, and it is universally allowed, it might be encreased infinitely more by proper regulations.

It now employs above 50,000 ton of shipping, and is carried on chiefly by our own manufactures, and furnishes the Colonies with 40,000 labourers yearly. The advantage to the revenue is equal to that of the merchants, and whatsoever is the annual value of the Negroes imported into our Colonies, so much is the benefit arising to government from the duties of the commodities produced by their labour: As for example, every Negro is admitted, besides earning provisions for himself, to produce by cultivation an hoghead of sugar; supposing that to weigh 12 Ct. the duty is 3l. 16s. od. (being 6s. 4d. per Ct.) and that being considered as an annuity for the Negroe's life is worth 38l. which is about the value of a new Negro.

The great encrease of the cultivated lands in our Colonies accounts for so great a number of Negroes being sent there yearly, and such profits accruing from their cultivation: and many are now clearing other lands, and will soon make similar returns. It has been said, that the numbers sent arose from so many dying in the Colonies from ill usage, but that is by no means true: the Planters consider their own interest, and use them better than they do our own convicts, for this plain reason, that in the latter they have only a temporary interest, in the former a permanent one; so that were our Plantations abroad carried on by indented *servants from England*, the same reasoning would hold good, and the labour they must undergo being increased by the short duration of property their masters had in them, and by their own unfitness to work in those hot Climates, would be such a drain of men as the Parent Country could not support. See Letter [I.] at the end of the Appendix..

[B.]

THREE of the following treatises, signed Mercator, appeared in the papers of June and July last, and, tho' they have met with much abuse, have had no rational confutation. In the second, Mercator seems to apprehend more pernicious consequences from Lord Mansfield's decision, than the generality of Merchants have thought of, who have employed their time on that subject, which shall be taken notice of in its proper place, and some further thoughts submitted to the public.

Thoughts upon the Lawfulness and Expediency of the SLAVE TRADE, addressed to the SOCIETY of MERCHANTS trading to Africa from the Port of London.

THE origin of slavery may perhaps admit of a doubt, but both sacred and profane history concur in allowing it to have been the practice, even from the earliest account of time. Among the Heathens, conquest undoubtedly was their plea for enslaving the vanquished countries; and Herodotus, in his Melpomene, adds, the many cruelties practised by the Scythians, and other neighbouring nations, on their prisoners of war, whom they looked upon as entirely their property, and whom, if they did not carry away captive, they put to death upon the spot. The Greeks and Romans, in their brightest and most learned æras, had their slaves, both taken in war and purchased with money, and from their times down to the present it has been the universal practice of not only every barbarous, but every civilized nation. I have been obliged to preface my sentiments with the sanction of profane antiquity to defend myself from the sneers of those great *geniuses* who allow of no authority drawn from sacred history; but to the sedate, to the reasonable, to the Christian readers, I shall more fully set forth the lawfulness of the Slave Trade from the express allowance of it in Holy Writ. As to its origin,
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it may possibly be derived from that sentence expressed against Canaan (from whom the Africans are descended) by his father Noah at the hour of his death.—“ * Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.” But both the origin of slavery, and the colour of the Africans, being incapable of positive proof, I shall leave these points for the curious, and proceed to the more express mention of slavery. When Joseph was ruler in Egypt, under Pharaoh, in the second year, when the Egyptians had parted with their money and cattle for bread, they came to Joseph, and said, “ † There is not aught left in the sight of my Lord, but our bodies and our lands: buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh.” By the Egyptians saying they had nothing left but their bodies and their lands, it is plain that both were considered as property; as absolute goods and chattels; as their money and their cattle; and the boors in Russia and Poland were, and may be now, in some places, obliged to till the ground for their Lord’s profit; a plain relic of this Egyptian servitude in both instances, *bodies* and *lands*. Had this been contrary to the law of God, it would doubtless have been forbidden, and probably in the Commandments from the Mount; but by them their proper treatment only is exacted, not their freedom. They say, “ ‡ The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work, nor thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant.” The souls of their servants were their own, and were not to be under the dominion of their masters: they were to have one day allowed them for the service of God, but their *bodies* were their master’s property, and for them they were to work the other six days. The law of God allows it possible even for an Hebrew to be a slave, by establishing the different treatment he is to receive from the hands of his brethren. “ || If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons and daughters, the wife and her chil-

* Genesis ix. 25. † Genesis xlvii. 18, 19. ‡ Exodus xx. 10. || Exodus xxi. 2, 3, &c.

children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go out free, then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him unto the door-post, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him *for ever*." By this express law, as to their own nation, it is as certain they bought others. They could give them wives, and retain them and their children, and if the very Hebrews once passed the first opportunity of the sabbatical year to assert their freedom, they, like the slaves of other nations, were fixed to the freehold, and continued servants *for ever*. Their six years servitude was like that of such of our indented servants, as serve so many years for a sum of money laid down, and which in that time they may be supposed to have earned, and it would be the greatest absurdity to imagine, a foreign slave should be instantly free on touching his master's home, when a native was confined to a six years servitude probably for a less price. The law goes on, " * If a man sell his daughter, she shall not, &c." By this it appears, that slavery might arise from the will of the father of the family, subject nevertheless to such restrictions as the law of God laid down. In the 21st verse it is expressly said of the master, " The servant is his money ;" yet he could not be wantonly cruel, for the smiting a servant so as that he lost an eye or a tooth † made him free. His neighbour could not injure him in his property, for if " ‡ his ox killeth a man or maid servant, he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver." Here was the price set on the head of each, and the master indemnified. Zechariah records the same price, and this price the malicious rulers of the synagogue gave the infatuated Judas for his sacred Master, as if they had been purchasing a common slave.—In the more full declaration of the law in Leviticus, 25th chapter, after the statutes for securing land, houses, and other possessions, in the families on whom they were first bestowed, and to whom every 50th, or jubilee year, they were to return, there follows the law of slaves in these clear terms

* Exodus xxi. 7, &c. † Ibid. ver. 26, 27. ‡ Ibid. ver. 32.—Zech. v. 11, 12.—
Matthew xxvi. 15.—Ezek. xxvii. 13.

terms : “ If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant, but as an hired servant and as a sojourner he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee : and then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt ; they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt fear thy God. Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round you : of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among ye, of them shall ye buy and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land, and they shall be your possession : And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bondmen for ever ; but over your brethren the children of Israel ye shall not rule one over another with rigour. If thy brother selleth himself to the stranger or sojourner by thee, he may be redeemed again, and if he be not redeemed, then he shall go out in the year of jubilee, both he and his children with him. For unto me the children of Israel are servants, they are my servants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt ; I am the Lord your God.”

This is so clear as to need no comment : there is a positive order to let the children of Israel go free for this plain reason, that they are the servants of the Lord their God : he redeemed them, and his they are, and are only to perform a reasonable time of servitude ; but of the nations round about, or dwelling among them, they are to purchase bond-servants, which are to be their possession, and like other goods and chattels descend to their heirs *for ever*, as was the case of the Gibeonites, who were made perpetual * slaves, (being hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation) and as such, exempted from the toll demanded of other free subjects ; and though they separated themselves from the customs of

the heathen and walked in the law of God, were yet, under the name of Nethinim, continued in the same state of slavery and service of the altar as long as the temple itself existed. As to slavery then thus stands that law, of which Moses said, " Behold I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land, whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people : For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for ? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day ? "

Thus stands that law, of which a greater than Moses said, " Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil, for I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till all be fulfilled. " And if slavery had been contrary to justice, which is the true humanity ; if it had been contrary to Christian charity, which is as much superior to the boasted *humanity of philosophy* as diamonds to glass, instead of enforcing the laws delivered to the Jews by his heavenly Father, our gracious lawgiver would have repealed that part of it, as well as the carnal ordinances it enjoined. Shall we then strain at a gnat and swallow a camel ? Shall we retain an indented servant, who is one of our brethren, in hard and disagreeable service ; and yet under a vain pretence of liberty, set an alien free at once, whose *whole* time we have purchased ? Shall we for a trifling debt enslave a brother for life in a loathsome prison, and give an alien by instant freedom such privileges as are superior to any which we enjoy ourselves ? Forbid it, heaven ! forbid it, national justice ! Cast out the bondwoman and her sons, and let them not have a superiority or even a portion among us. Let them have no footing in England. They have enough abroad, for their privileges in our colonies are already much superior to any they enjoy in their own country. Look at them in Africa : there those indeed are sold who are slaves by descent, or have

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committed such villainies, as the laws of their own country condemn them to slavery for. There they have no chance of ever being free; there they have no sort of property, and their very lives are subject to their masters caprice without fear of punishment, or being in any degree accountable. Some indeed are captives taken in war, whom if *we* did not purchase, *they* would massacre. The barbarity of their own masters makes them think we buy them only to eat them, and this mistaken notion is the only thing that tempts them to rise in mutiny. But of all those who have purchased their freedom, or whom the liberality of their masters has made free, not one individual ever yet returned or wished to return to their own country; nor would any one of them accept of their freedom on such terms: a plain proof, that they are in a much better situation than ever they could possibly expect to be if at home. For with us, though slaves, their property is sacred; and numbers, in an actual state of slavery, have property to the amount of three, four or five hundred pounds sterling, who yet will not buy their liberty, though they could have it for one fifth of what they are possessed of: With us their lives are secured by our laws; and with us they are maintained when old and past their labour. When we have heaped so many advantages on them, shall we inconsiderately make them equal to ourselves, nay, give them a superiority, and make them our masters? Who are we that judge other men's servants? By their own laws they are such. I do not descend to the sophisms or glosses of the law, but go to the fountain head and foundation of all law, to that sacred book, which once was esteemed worthy of being our guide, and the nearer to which human laws approached, the more pure they formerly were adjudged to be: And I cannot doubt but that unprejudiced truth, flowing from such a fountain, will bear down the opposition of licentiousness and folly, though tricked out in the borrowed garb of liberty and humanity.

If then we have the laws of God on our side, and if we really confer a benefit on the slaves we purchase, we may be allowed to consider in the next place how this foolishly-wished-for liberty of theirs may affect our political state. If we do not go beyond our duty as subjects to the King of Heaven, we may be allowed to consult in the next place the interest

of our King on earth, the dignity of his crown, and the welfare of his empire. This may be laid down as an axiom: If the Africans are adjudged free in Great Britain, they will not long be otherwise in the colonies. They have sense, and some of them great abilities: all of them resolution and contempt of death. They now are with difficulty kept in subjection, but then they would to a man rebel, and allow their *masters* no portion of that favour, which *they* allow to them. They would act by their own laws. Conquest would make them our masters, and we should hold our lives and properties at their caprice, whose sport is to do mischief, and whose wantonness is cruelty. A few from hence, with the arts they have learned among us, would return to the colonies, spirit up the rest, and conquer, pillage, and destroy, though they cannot long enjoy the fruits of their conquest; to the utter stagnation of trade, the destruction of commerce, and the infinite loss of the West-India proprietors, merchants, and others connected with them, which would be a severer blow than we ever yet felt—a blow, which half a century would not recover, and which God in his mercy avert from us. If we should not have sense enough to maintain that a bare crossing the sea, and setting foot on British ground, shall not divest us of our property in them, they will have ingenuity enough to escape here in shoals: They will people our island with Calibans, and Britons become a motley race, sprung from despicable fugitives and horrid miscreants, whom their own land has vomited forth. It is pity the good sense of individuals had not for ever prevented this coming into a question, by restraining them within those limits, where only they can be useful, and where our own subjects cannot support the heat, as they can.

But as it is now become a question, and we have no law to settle it by, let us take the scriptures for our present guide, and I hope the good sense of the legislature will soon establish a proper law to secure that property to us, for the attaining of which we have not only the faith, but the encouragement of both houses of parliament, with the sanction of our gracious monarch. The African trade is subject to too many inconveniencies and discouragements, to load it with more; though indeed this rather lays the axe to the root of it at once. Let then the legislature reflect that the

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slave-trade, under proper regulations, is absolutely and essentially necessary not only to the well-being, but to the very existence of our colonies; that it is by much the most valuable branch of commerce which as a maritime nation we now enjoy; that in manufactures and shipping there is to the value of 100,000 l. monthly exported in this trade; that it is not contrary to the laws of God, and has been ratified by those of men; and that freedom granted to negroes in England would totally destroy this trade throughout all our empire, and leave our natural enemies in the sole possession of this our chief source of wealth and commerce. Let the legislature think at the same time of having those abuses rectified which have already weakened it very considerably, and let them put such a heavy fine upon the master of every negro imported here as shall amount to a prohibition; and let all negroes, though free, who presume to set a foot in England, pay the same, or forfeit their freedom: Let Government superadd to the laws of God, and to the laws of Africa, such a law of Great Britain, as shall preserve her pure, and make her flourishing and respectable.

London, 25 May, 1772.

MERCATOR.

The next Tract that appeared under the same signature, and by the similarity of stile appeared to come from the same pen, was the following.

The material Part of Lord Mansfield's Speech on the Negro Cause, with some Thoughts on the present State of Slaves.

“WE will pay due attention to the opinion of Sir Philip York and Mr. Talbot in the Year 1729, by which they pledged themselves to the British planters for the legal consequences of bringing negro slaves into this kingdom, or their being baptized; which opinion was repeated and recognized by Lord Hardwicke, sitting as Chancellor, October 19, 1749, to the following effect; he said that trover would lie for a negro slave; that a notion prevailed that if a slave came into England, or became a christian, he thereby became emancipated; but there was no foundation in law for such a notion; that when he and

Lord Talbot were Attorney and Solicitor-General, this notion of a slave becoming free by being baptized, prevailed so strongly, that the planters industriously prevented their becoming christians: upon which their opinion was taken, and upon their best consideration they were both clearly of opinion, that a slave did not in the least alter his situation or state towards his master or owner, either by being christened or coming to England: that though the statute of Charles II. had abolished homage-tenure so far that no man could be a *villein regardant*, yet if he would acknowledge himself a *villein* engrossed in any court of record, he knew of no way by which he could be entitled to his freedom without the consent of his master."

Thus far his lordship proceeds by the opinion of those two great lawyers, whose decrees, when at the head of the Chancery, were seldom, if ever, reversed, and whose opinions might justly claim that *due attention* his lordship promises to pay to them, because they were founded on the laws of God, as will appear by comparing them with that Tract published in the London Packet of June last, where the scripture doctrine of slaves was fully set forth; and as christians we ought to adhere inviolably to this maxim, *Those bounds which the spirit of God has set, ought never to be removed by men*: and because they were ratified by the laws of men, so that our courts of record still maintained a power of fixing the master's property. " Yet, says his lordship, (notwithstanding the inconvenient consequences felt from giving a decision) we are clearly of opinion we ought to give judgment on the *only* question before us, Is the cause sufficient for remanding him? if not, he must be discharged. The cause is, he absented and departed from his master's service, and refused to return and serve him during his stay in England, whereupon, by his master's order, he was put on board the ship by force, and there detained in secure custody to be carried out of the kingdom and sold."

The remainder of the speech is too vague to come into consideration, for it talks of foreigners being exempt from the laws of their own countries when in England, which is nothing to the case in point; it mixes the laws of hired servants with those of purchased slaves, which is
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so gross an error, I can scarce believe it could proceed from Lord Mansfield, but must charge it to the inattention of the copier. It says "the state of slavery must be decided by *positive* law," yet produces *no law*; and though it asserts that no master was ever allowed to take his slave by force out of this kingdom, yet gives no instance of any master's attempting it, and his having been prevented. We must therefore look upon this as a cause *novæ impressionis*, and state it short. An acknowledged slave refuses, while in England, to serve the master who purchased him. Can that master carry him out of England, or must the slave be discharged here?—For as to the words "taking a slave by force to be sold abroad," as a Judge cannot be supposed to speak *ad invidiam*, we must suppose them a mistake, for no man can positively affirm the precise manner I shall dispose of my property when out of the kingdom: I may retain my slave in my own service, or if I do sell him, the laws of the island, where I then may be, will authorise me so to do, and no laws in England will destroy those laws abroad, which they have solemnly ratified. That part of the question then cannot come under consideration, but the whole is reduced to this: Can the laws of England discharge my acknowledged slave from the service he owes me? For, if I have a right to command his service, I have a right to command it in all parts of the world; and if he refuses, can the law take my real property away, because I endeavour to force him to a compliance? or must I be compelled to lodge a formal complaint with the Lord Chancellor every time he refuses to clean my shoes? for such will be my case; for if I attempt to force him, he absents himself; if I attempt to send him where he may be useful, he complains, and the law discharges him, gives him his liberty; so I have nothing to do but be *his* slave, let him do what he pleases, and maintain him in insolence and idleness. My hired servant I can pay off, retain part of his wages for his neglect of business, and otherwise punish him for offences committed. My apprentice I can confine, and make him serve out his time in Bridewell, if he absents himself; but my slave must be *discharged*, and gain his *liberty* at the expence and by the loss of my *property*. Certainly, true liberty can never exist, where property is on so tottering a foundation.

Certainly, *due attention* was not paid to the opinion of those great lawyers, for if an “action of trover can lie for a slave,” a slave must be property : “if a slave does not in the least alter his situation or state towards his master or owner, either by being christened or coming to England,” he must obey his master’s commands, and then there can be no need of force. If the slave offends in the first instance by not obeying, it would be very hard to punish the master for an error in the manner of compelling him, and to bestow on the slave for his disobedience the greatest reward a slave can possibly receive for years worn out in his master’s service, a steady attachment to his interest and constant obedience to his commands.—As, after the authority of Sir Philip Yorke and Mr. Talbot, it were presumptuous to mention or quote authorities, I shall only observe that the institutions of Ina, King of the West Saxons, A. D. 692 (with advice and consent of his Father, of the Bishops, of all the Aldermen, and sage antients of his people, and of the assembly of the servants of God) settle the laws of slaves on the foundation of the Holy Scriptures, nor do I find any instance of slaves being *discharged* from their service, except the following, on which I leave every person to make his own reflections : Mahomet, finding the decoy of religion insufficient, added that other concomitant in popular disturbances, LIBERTY, proclaiming it to be the will of God that *all* men should enjoy it, and that he might set an example of it in his own family, *discharged from servitude* his own slave Zeidi, and entertained him as his equal. Hence slaves from all parts of Arabia forsook their masters, and fled to him as their Redeemer ; by whose assistance *he enslaved* the countries they came from, *and they wantoned* in the blood of their former masters.

London, July 1, 1772.

M E R C A T O R.

From Mercator’s observations in this and his preceding Tract, it is plain that he apprehended the declaring slaves free in England would make them free in the Colonies also. In defence of which opinion it has been observed that the Act of 7 and 8 Will. III. c. 22. expressly declares, “All laws, customs, &c. practised in any of the Plantations, repugnant
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to any laws already here, or to this act, or any other law hereafter to be made, relating to those Plantations, shall be null and void." Others again assert that the Colonies, having received their Constitution from the King, are not subject to any laws of the British parliament, but to the acts of their own assemblies, when once they have received the royal assent. It might be dangerous, it would certainly be indiscreet to attempt to deprive them of what must so fatally affect their whole property, and therefore, it is rather to be supposed that Lord Mansfield meant virtually to prohibit bringing any negroes to England, and that, tho' the lenity of our laws could not suppose any absolute slaves in England, yet they were still subject to those who bought them, and could be employed by no one else. Summerfet, the negro, was a prisoner, and his judge naturally his advocate, speaking for and leaning to the merciful side of the question; but there is no doubt that the same judge would punish any man severely, who inveigled a Negro from his master under the idle pretence of universal liberty: for as this was a civil cause, and the very Habeas Corpus act (if we allow that to include foreign slaves, as its object) says expressly that "Persons charged with process in any civil cause shall be kept in custody for such suit," his order of being *discharged* could only mean his release from such imprisonment, as supposed him rather a Felon, than a Debtor. In this light his Lordship's decision will not have the bad effects with which Mercator charges it. His next Tract recapitulates the two former, mentions the enfranchisement of slaves by Mahomet, and the cruel consequences that attended it; and then proceeds, as follows:

A due attention to this last fact, and the preceding authorities, might be deemed an adequate bulwark of our own liberties, and a sufficient security of our properties; but to obviate all doubts, I shall reconsider slavery, as a Christian, and as a British free-born subject. As a Christian, the Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon clearly shews me, that that great apostle allowed slavery to be legal. Onesimus, the slave of Philemon, had robbed his master and fled to Rome, where he was converted to Christianity by St. Paul's preaching. To prove this conversion perfect, St. Paul enjoins him to restore himself and his services to his master, and that he might go with less apprehension of punishment, sends this
epistle

epistle by him, in which no injunction is laid on Philemon to receive him as an absolute free man on account of his having been baptized ; but the favours he asks for him are all asked and acknowledged as on his own account : he promises to indemnify Philemon for his loss : he expresses his wish that he could have kept Onesimus, but declines it, as not having his consent whose property he was, and with the greatest humility beseeches him for love's sake to receive this true convert and sincere Christian, " his son whom he had begotten in his bonds," as free, because he had instilled such principles in him, that he might depend on his being hereafter faithful and useful. Had slavery been contrary to Christianity, would this have been the stile of that apostle, whose boldness in speaking the truth, and zeal in defending it, were as conspicuous as his knowledge and learning. He was bred at the feet of Gamaliel ; his improved abilities could not be imposed upon, and his integrity of heart would never have permitted him to have sent Onesimus back in any degree of uncertainty, had the laws of God enfranchised him, or established universal freedom. In the Acts of the Apostles also, the chief captain at Jerusalem told St. Paul, on his calling himself a Roman, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. St. Paul answered, But I was free born. His birth-right, not his religion or locality, made him free.

As a Christian then, I can with a safe conscience purchase negro slaves, and when they are my property dispose of them where I please by virtue of the rights I am entitled to, as a British free-born subject : for, among these rights settled by Magna Charta, and confirmed in the reign of Henry III. are the following :—Magna Charta, cap. 1. We have granted to all the freemen of our realm, for us and for our heirs for ever, these liberties underwritten, to have and to hold to them and their heirs of us and our heirs for ever.—Cap. 9. The city of London shall have all the old liberties and customs which it hath been used to have.—Cap. 14. For offences a freeman's *villein* shall be amerced.—Cap. 29. No freeman shall be taken, imprisoned, or disseized of freehold, liberties or free customs, but by a lawful judgment of peers, or by the law of the land. So far Magna Charta ; now observe 1 Edw VI. cap. 3. He that takes a servant or beggar idle three days together, shall have him as his *slave*, and

and, if he does not work, may treat him as a *slave* with chains, imprisonment, or stripes. By a comparison of these laws, one with the other, we see the difference between a freeman and a slave. The freeman cannot be taken, imprisoned, or disseized of liberties or free customs but by lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land: The slave, if disobedient, may be chained, imprisoned, or punished: a very great and a very essential difference. And where now is the law, that bestows on African slaves, when in England, those dear-bought and deservedly incommunicable privileges, derived to me from my ancestors, to which my birthright entitles me! The only authority alledged is that of 12 Car. II. cap. 24. "All tenures of lands by homage are hereby discharged, and all hereafter are to be in free and common soccage only." Here is not one word of foreign slaves. *Villeinage*, or the holding of lands by fellow-subjects on condition of obeying their lords, and following them to battle, is indeed annulled, and servants must in consequence be entitled to the rights of freemen. But does this invalidate my claim to my purchased negro's services, or do I hold him by a tenure different to that by which I hold all my other property? Certainly I do not, and I challenge the law to shew me by what statute I a British merchant and citizen of London can be disseized of property which Magna Charta ensures me, which 1 Edw. VI. cap. 3. explains my legal power over, and which no other subsequent statute has yet deprived me of: Till the legislature passes an act with such unaccountable powers, I will defend my property of a negro, as I would that of my purse, against all invaders, and when the legislature does adjudge my purchased slave to be *no* property, I will submit as I would to an earthquake or a pestilence.

But if there is in Britons any regard for their own privileges, or for the crowned heads under whom their liberties were established, they can never lavish away their own birthright, never throw such contempt on the ancient institutions of the realm: Besides of late years, the *Asiento*,* whereby England was to supply Spain with negroes, was

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ratified

* In the *Asiento* treaty, which was to continue in force from 1713 to 1743, is this remarkable clause, sect. 17. "Asientists, when quitting the Indies, are to load at their choice the effects they may

ratified by the crowns of Great Britain, Spain, and France. Can the Defender of the Faith be supposed to join with his most Catholic Majesty, and shall his most Christian Majesty lend his assistance to, and ratify a solemn contract for a trade, illicit in its principles, dishonourable in the pursuit, and the chief article of it subject to immediate loss, if it touches an English port? Ancient custom and universal consent have undoubtedly established a law to the contrary, and the Africans must remain as they are, *slaves by purchase*, the real property of their masters, till they of their own free will present them with their freedom. Where slept the Pope's thunders, while these dominions were under his sway, that he never vindicated the universal right of freedom? How came it that no nation ever yet asserted so natural a privilege, if it had from the first had religion and reason for its foundation? How came it just before the passing of that act in 1749, by which all subjects were free to trade from port Sallee in Barbary to the cape of Good Hope, that my Lord Chancellor Hardwicke should pledge himself to the future traders for the security of their property, and repeat his and Lord Talbot's former opinion, that "slaves do not in the least alter their situation or state towards their masters or owners, either by being christened, or coming into England? † Was this done to betray them into Westminster-hall, and then bereave them of a property which they thought established? That great man could have no such intention, but undoubtedly, from the plain acts I have quoted, and other instances, which his and Lord Talbot's superior knowledge might lay before them, gave that decision which till now has never been controverted. Now Mahomet's doctrine is revived: "All men indiscriminately are proclaimed free, if they

may have, and bring them in security to Europe." It can hardly be supposed they should have no negroes, and if so, and they were free on their arrival, how could they be said to bring them in security? If a contradiction in terms and a manifest absurdity attends the supposing them free, there can be no stronger proof that they remain *in statu quo*, slaves as when abroad.

† This guarantee was extremely necessary, for if slaves did not remain in the same state, what Governor in Africa could permit his castle-slaves to assist a vessel in her passage home, who had lost her sailors by sickness or desertion? And must not this be a great additional risk for a merchant to run besides those of the seas and trade? In short, their being free in England tends to destroy all confidence, and put an end to all intercourse of kindness and assistance among the traders, governors, and other British subjects at home and abroad.

they touch English ground." This wonderful discovery was reserved for this age of pure religion, wherein infidelity meets with applause and Christianity with ridicule : for this age of perfect liberty, wherein God and the King are illiberally abused and affronted with impunity ; for this age of rigid virtue, wherein public dissipation engrosses the whole concern of life, and plunges its unhappy votaries into excess of vice and infamy ; for this age of tender humanity, wherein the cries of the poor are unattended to, and insensibility supplies the place of wisdom.

How great and glorious must Britain *now* be ! not only free herself, but the cause of freedom to other men ; to men, who may possibly have forfeited their *lives* to the laws of their own country, though their sentence was commuted into *slavery*. Here indeed is excess of generosity : But hold ! is there no allay ? Are we consistent with ourselves, and is our liberty as perfect in every other instance ? Ask the most useful set of men, the British sailors. They may point you out the probability of the following dismal scene : A mate * comes home from the farthest part of Africa, with all his little property vested in a negroe, whom he has taught to cook his kettle, and intends that another voyage shall repay his principal and his trouble, but an infernal press-gang seizes him the moment he sets foot on British ground, takes him from his present free estate, throws a cloud over his future prospects, and he is sent perhaps for ever, or till worn out in the service, to the East Indies, while his negroe is instantly free to go where he pleases, not only unmolested, but protected against the just demands of his owner. This is modern liberty ! These are the glorious effects of removing the ancient landmarks, till the very boundaries of right and wrong are confused and undistinguishable ! This is called state necessity, the tyrant's plea, by which mankind have so frequently been injured. If ever state necessity could be admitted as a plea, it might in this African cause, had it wanted so slender a support, for if the African trade fails, farewell the West Indies, and with them farewell the glory of the British flag, and the strength of the British nation ; but far be it from the London merchants to apply to

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* In the beginning of last war mates were pressed, and were promised that they should be preferred to masters, but numbers at the end of the war were still midshipmen.

government to commit any arbitrary act, or make use of so dangerous an expedient. They desire only their just rights and privileges, confirmed by Magna Charta, transmitted down to them and their heirs for ever, as British free-born subjects; and should their grievances fail of meeting with due attention and redress, they have only the modern comfort, their posterity must be ruined, but probably England may last their time.

London, MERCATOR.
July 28, 1772.

Mercator here seems not to have carried his arguments with respect to the legality of slavery under either the British constitution, or under the Christian dispensation, as far as they will go; at least, he has not given all the authorities he might from the British laws, or the New Testament. As to our common law, that is universally allowed to arise from custom, and to prevail till contradicted by the statute law. The feudal serfs were of various kinds. Under the Saxons they were absolute slaves, as the Gibeonites were to the Israelites. Under the Normans they were admitted to a greater degree of freedom, or at least their service was changed from the slavish tenure of tilling the lands, as the Poles and Russians do to this day, to that of attending their lords in war. But whatever privileges they had seem to have arisen from the ease and permission of their masters, and not from any positive law. But this subject requires a volume of itself, and has been amply discussed by Dr. Robertson. It remains only to be briefly observed, that at all periods of the British nation, both before and since the Conquest, slavery was not illegal, but maintained in a stricter or easier manner, with a milder or harsher term, till Charles II. in the 12th year of his reign discharged all such tenures among the natives, but by not mentioning, certainly left foreign slaves as he found them. As to the New Testament, St. Paul says, * “ Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it, but if thou mayest be made free use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s freeman; likewise also he that is called being

* 1 Cor. vii. 20, &c.

being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God." These verses are thus expounded by the whole class of commentators. Remain in that state of life wherein God has placed you. Be not concerned, or think, if you are a slave, δαλος, you will be less acceptable to God, or as if that condition was unworthy a Christian; therefore do not attempt to shake off the yoke of slavery under a pretence, that through Christianity all are free; but if by just means you acquire your liberty, preserve it, that no master may have power over you to cause you to sin; for you are subject to Christ, who paid down his life to redeem you from sin. Therein consists the true Christian's liberty; therefore as I said at first, remain quietly in that state of life wherein God has placed you, as a duty you owe to him as well as to the community.—Many other parts of Scripture mention bond and freemen, which distinction could not have been kept up, had liberty, civil liberty arisen from Christianity. St. Paul says *, "By one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free." And again †, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." And again, ‡ "Put on the new man, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all." And again §, "Whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." St. John describing the day of judgment mentions || "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and every bondman and every freeman hiding themselves. In another place **, "free and bond receive a mark." In another place they † are enumerated with the kings, rich men and captains, which evidently shews, they were one of the orders of mankind; and though lowest in the civil Polity, equal in all spiritual concerns, sure of a reward after this life, when their great master began his dominion, if they behaved virtuously in the station allotted them on earth.

* 1 Cor. xii. 13. † Gal. iii. 28. ‡ Col. iii. 11. § Eph. vi. 8. || Rev. vi. 15.
** Rev. xiii. 16. † Rev. xix. 18.

earth. Slavery therefore does not appear to have been forbidden, but allowed by the law of Christ, as well as that of Moses, by the universal practice of all former ages and nations, and by the prophecies concerning the day of judgment, so that there seems reason to suppose it will still remain, as long as the world itself exists.

[C.]

BESIDES the legality of carrying on the African trade, it may be proper to hear the West Indians speak for themselves as to their necessity of having negroes, and the right and title by which they hold them, when purchased.

An Extract from Candid Considerations on the Judgment lately awarded in the Negroe-Cause, by the Court of King's Bench. By a West India Merchant.

[This author contends that, as Magna Charta related only to freemen, and left *villeins* and bondmen in their former state of slavery, (insisting simply on the cause of imprisonments being shown, when they happened to be thus punished by their lords) and that, as the law had never any negroes in contemplation, the courts of law ought not to have shown them more favour than to *villeins*, if any such remained in the kingdom. He asserts, that whites are incapable of cultivating our plantations, and that therefore slaves are necessary.]

“THE nature of the West India climate, and the impossibility of clearing and cultivating the soil there, by any other than negroe labourers, as it was first the occasion of employing them, so it must ever remain, as long as our colonies exist; because, this natural necessity is not to be cured by any alternative. Some writers have affirmed, that the sugar islands were first cultivated by white men, who shewed no unfitness for labour there, before negroe slaves were introduced; but these authors deal in reveries, and seem entirely ignorant both of the subject and the climate they treat upon. According to Ligon's account,

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the English, who first settled at Barbadoes about the year 1625, found the woods so thick, most of the trees so large and massive, that they were unable to clear the ground of them; by which means, he says, that twenty years afterwards he found potatoes, maize, and bonavists, planted between the boughs, lying along upon the surface. Potatoes, corn, and pulse, were all they were able to plant for subsistence; and these, with the wild hogs they occasionally slew, served only to keep life and soul together. The only produce they could cultivate for export, was tobacco, which (probably for want of sufficient cleaning the ground) turned out so worthless as to yield no profit at the English market. The prolific quality of the land, then fresh and unimpaired, made some little amends for want of adequate culture; or otherwise they would in all likelihood have been destitute of any vegetable crops for their support: yet fewer hands were at that time required to cultivate the soil than afterwards; for, on their first forming their sugar estates, one hundred negroes could manage the largest plantation in the island. Nothing effectual was done towards a profitable settlement of the island, until after the introduction of negroes; by whose better capacity for field labour, it became so thriving, that, in 1646, it contained twenty thousand whites, and the blacks amounted to a far greater number. The judicious Linde, speaking from his own experience, remarks, “that there are some services of such a nature as cannot well be performed in hot and unhealthy countries by Europeans, without imminent danger of their health and lives. The first is, that of cutting down woods, or clearing the ground from trees, shrubs, &c.” In proof of this assertion he gives several instances; some of which, I shall repeat after him. “At the conclusion of the late peace, the Captain of a ship of war went ashore at the island of Dominica, with twelve of his men, to cut down the wood, and to clear a piece of ground which he intended to have purchased; but in a few days, sickness obliged them to desist from this dangerous work; the Captain, and eleven out of his twelve assistants, being seized with violent fevers, of which several died. The Ludlow-Castle, a ship of war of forty guns, in a late voyage to the coast of Guinea, lost twenty-five of her men at Sierra Leon, who were employed in cutting wood for the ship.

ship. When the *Lion*, *Spence*, and some other ships of war, were employed at Port Antonio, in Jamaica, in clearing Navy Island of wood, in order to erect storehouses for the squadron on that station, the men, while cutting it down, were seized with a fever and delirium. The phrenzy attacked a man so suddenly, and with so much fury, that with his hatchet, if not prevented, he would have cut to pieces the persons who stood near him; and those who were seized in this manner, and were left to remain on shore, either died, or suffered a dangerous fit of sickness. This is an occupation (says the same author) which has often proved destructive to Europeans in those climates, and in which they ought never to be employed, especially in the rainy season; there being numberless instances of white persons, when cutting down the woods at that season, who have been taken ill in the morning, and died at night." He adds (although he is no advocate for slavery) that, "if the purchasing of negroes on the coast of Guinea can be justified, it must be from the absolute necessity there is for employing them, instead of white persons, in such services as these." To the foregoing I may venture to subjoin another history, the truth of which is well known to many gentlemen of Jamaica. I mean the case of the Palatines; several of whom having come over not many years ago, to settle there under the encouragements granted by the assembly of that island, had tracts of wood-land assigned them; but, for want of negroes, were utterly incapable of clearing it from the trees, and perished for the most part in the attempt. If this example, among others which my memory furnishes, is disregarded, due credit, I hope, will be given to the preceding relations published by Mr. Linde, an evidence wholly disinterested in the issue of this question. If our seamen, who are the hardiest of our common people, and the most inured to the change of climate, are so unequal to the task, much less adapted to it are others of the lower class in England, or those who might be most likely to hire themselves out to Plantation service: I have only mentioned the felling of trees in the West Indies (some of which are several feet in diameter, and so hard as to shiver the best tempered axe,) in order to the forming of new settlements; but the labour of breaking up, and hoeing the ground, in the manner proper for cane-planting, and
under

under a full exposure to the sun, is no less impracticable to Europeans, whether seasoned or unseasoned to the climate. Slave-holding might perhaps be very well discontinued in every province of the North American continent, situated to the North of the Carolinas. The custom of introducing negroes in the northern colonies, to perform their field-work, has rendered the labour of the white inhabitants extremely dear. This high rate has given cause to their continuing the employment of negroes there, whose labour is no further necessary than as it is cheaper. This will probably terminate of itself, whenever the white inhabitants shall be so multiplied, by their natural progress of increase, as to allow a suitable abundance of them for all employments. But in the southern continental province, and the sugar islands, this practice cannot be laid aside, so long as we persist in the cultivation of them for the purposes of trade; because, it is impossible to cultivate them with European labourers; and because the white inhabitants, I presume, can never increase there by propagation in sufficient numbers. The natives, or Creoles, are the only whites who can be supposed, by those acquainted with these climates, to be capable of being brought, by long habit and use, to the laborious occupations of husbandry, and forming new settlements with their own hands: But, unless families in general were poorer, hindered by their necessities from removing to Europe, and confined to their native spot, there to breed and multiply, no adequate number could be reasonably expected. In Jamaica alone, we should require twenty times the number of white inhabitants we now have there. A long series of time must pass away before such a stock of native whites could be acquired, by the ordinary course of increase. Even if we should suppose that they married regularly, and doubled their number, like the North Americans, once in every twenty or twenty-two years, it would require near one hundred years to furnish the complement; and then we must further suppose great part of the whole number so very indigent, as to be obliged to toil hard for a subsistence, and to prefer the labour of clearing woodland and digging the earth to any other. If the labouring people, in any commercial country, are in proportion to the rest of the inhabitants as four to one, we should require a very large stock, to furnish a constant

and sufficient number of Plantation labourers; indeed many more than we could hope to gain by natural propagation, since it is not probable that they could by any means be brought to encrease, grow up, and thrive, in the like rapid manner as we observe of the North Americans. Most certain it is, that, without the introduction of negroe slaves, Great Britain would have been able to settle no one profitable colony in America. If therefore, following what has been rightly called the Utopian system of Georgia, which brought that settlement to nothing, we should inhibit the further prosecution of our African trade for labourers, such a measure would probably, if not infallibly, be attended with the hasty decline of our most valuable colonies in the west; and a loss of all the important advantages now gained from their cultivation. A barbarity might be perhaps the more immediate consequence of such a prohibition; and of such a nature, as deservedly to excite horror in the mind of every humane Briton; I mean, the practice which must then be fallen upon, of employing white labourers, when negroes could no longer be procured, to keep up the number answerable to our cultivation; an employment in which thousands and ten thousands of our countrymen might perish miserably, without producing one single benefit to the mother country. Before we entered into the African slave trade, our first settlers had no other than these hired servants, who proved unequal to the task, and might literally be said to exhaust themselves in digging their own graves. It was a complaint in the administration of Colonel D'Oyley, long before the establishment of sugar-works in Jamaica, that the officers of his army harrassed and destroyed the common soldiers (though well seasoned to the climate) by employing them as field labourers. This utter inaptitude of Europeans to such occupations in hot climates, and the impossibility of supplying them with white labourers from any other source than Europe, leave no room for questioning, but that we must either abandon all these settlements, ruin many thousands of our fellow subjects, and resign our fortune into the hands of foreign powers, differing from us in sentiments; or we must conduct them, as hitherto we have successfully done, by the labour of negroes; whose constitutions being by nature and

the Divine Will appropriated to these climates, they are evidently the fittest for such employments there.

In the first part of this treatise on the trade from Great Britain to Africa, the same point this Author insists on was maintained, that Magna Charta related only to freemen, and left villeins and bondmen in their former state of slavery. Soon after this Pamphlet the following sensible Tract appeared in the papers.

ADMITTING the African Trade to be ever so diabolical, or the means by which the negroe's body was first obtained ever so unfair, no blame can deservedly rest on the Planter, who is ignorant of the means, and innocent of the guilt. That trade has been carried on by this nation from time immemorial. King, Lords, and Commons have shared in its profits, and concurred in various laws, for supporting, regulating, and firmly establishing it. Some of these laws declare to the subject, that he holds a right of property in the negroes he buys; others tell him, that negroes are chattles, saleable and convertible like any other goods, for payment of dues to the revenue, or other debts; that they are to be held as money in the hands of a Planter debtor, and received as money by his creditor. Large sums are granted every year by parliament for maintaining forts and garrisons, and making alliances with the native Slave Merchants in Africa, for the advancement of this traffic, to the express intent that the Planter may be constantly and cheaply supplied: Vast emoluments are also drawn, as well by the mercantile and manufacturing subjects resident in Great Britain, and their dependants, as by the national treasury, from the profits gained on the sale of negroes to the West India Planter, and from the produce of their labour. Thus the whole nation may be said to be in some way or other interested in the advantages drawn from this trade, and to participate a benefit from the sweat of the negroe's brow.

If the original contract in Africa for this negroe's services was illegal or unfair, or if no colour of a contract subsisted, this surely is a point to be settled between the negroe and the party who sold him there without any right so to do: or else between the negroe and that govern-

ment which by law permitted it's merchants to buy him of one who had no right to sell. But the Planter respects no one in this case except the British merchant; who, under the authority and encouragement of the laws, having brought the negroe to market *overt*, the contract is openly made between these two. If the Planter has bought a *freeman* instead of a perpetual servant, he is defrauded; for he paid his money under sanction of the laws, and purchased what the laws will in another place arbitrarily deprive him of. If the property spoken of is not to be secured to him by the laws which permit and invite him to buy it, then is there neither faith, justice, nor equity in them; they are no better than empty illusions, snares to the industrious subject, and eminently reproachful to the nation. Something more, however, than the pretended magical touch of the English *Air* seems requisite to divest him of what has been so solemnly guarantied by the consent of the nation in parliament; for, when he made the purchase, he was not apprised of those mysterious and invisible emanations of English *Liberty*, which were to make the bargain void, and, like the *prest* of a juggler, turn his gold into counters.

By stat. 14. Edw. III. it is enacted, "That all merchants, *denizens*, and foreigners, except enemies, may, without lett, safely come into the realm of England with their *goods* and *merchandizes*, and safely tarry, and safely return." This is further and more amply confirmed by the stat. 5 Rich. II. in these words:

"It is accorded and assented in the parliament, that all manner of merchant strangers, of whatsoever nation or country they be, being of the amity of the King and of his realm, shall be welcome, and freely may come within the realm of England, and elsewhere within the king's power, as well within franchise as without, and there to be conversant to merchandize, and tarry as long as them liketh, as those whom our said Lord the King by the tenor hereof taketh into his protection and safeguard, with their *goods*, *merchandizes*, and *all manner of familiars*; and for so much the King willeth and commandeth, that they and every of them be well, friendly, and merchant-like intreated and demeaned, in all parts within his said realm and power, with their merchandizes and

all manner of goods, and suffered to go and come, and into their proper country peaceably to return, without disturbance or impeachment of any."

So far as *aliens* are not restrained of this extensive license to introduce their wares and negotiate here, by the subsequent statutes of trade, these ancient acts are still unrepealed; and what I conclude from them is, that considering our Colony-negroes as *goods* and articles of *merchandize*, in which sense the statute laws of the realm, as well as the colony laws, esteemed them, the Planters possessed of this merchandize, the importation of which into the kingdom is not yet prohibited by any law, appear warrantable, nor only in bringing it hither, but in holding it while here, and in peaceably returning with it; for if these laws have granted liberty of ingress and egress, and defended the goods of merchants and denizens resorting to it, surely the Planters, who are natural-born subjects of the realm, are rightfully and lawfully entitled to equal protection, and in the fullest extent, with respect to their goods.

But if this claim of property in Great Britain be really offensive to the constitution of the kingdom, and injurious to its welfare, it seems at least not improper that, for the sake of commerce, and in justice to the Planter, an effective law should be passed by parliament, forbidding him to introduce his negroes within the realm, under penalty of forfeiting that claim: for nothing less than a *positive law* can prove to every subject's conviction, that a negroe-slave is entitled to the rights of an Englishman, on the instant of his inhaling the air of England. Our law, I grant, favours liberty, and rather induces a particular mischief than a general inconvenience; but as the latter is most likely to ensue from this national breach of faith, and repugnancy to the main principles of commerce, it merits attention, that equal justice should be dispensed to the Planter purchaser; so that, in being liberal to the negroe, no wrong nor damage should be done to an useful subject, who has, at least, an equal pretension to be favoured by the laws of his country, and to some indemnity for the deprivation of what those laws assured him was his right. It is no less just than honourable, that the state, which has received his *money*, should make him some requital, and by a fair purchase, rather than I know not what strange efficacy of the English *air*, redeem his

his negroe from bondage. Such a measure would confirm the freed man in perpetual enjoyment of the boon bestowed upon him, by superseding all future claim of his master, in any other part of the British dominions. The very idea of such a local emancipation is ridiculous, since what better right has a Planter to reclaim a fugitive negroe in the colony than in Britain? The laws of *Meum* and *Tuum* are alike in both; and, as Englishmen, it is the same as if the lands of both were in one continuity. If a statute should openly avow, what some of our law interpreters have taken upon them to assert, the Planters abroad would then know the certain consequence of bringing negroes with them into Britain, and conduct themselves accordingly; it is due to them and to all others concerned in the Plantation trade, that a point so essential should be explained by parliament; or, should the nation incline to purchase the negroe's freedom, it would be no less equitable.

A P L A N T E R.

D.

THE legality of the African Trade, and property in purchased negroes seems beyond any doubt, but the declaimers on the other side of the question might think themselves neglected, were they to be passed over in silence.* At the head of these appears the formidable Anthony Benezet, with a corps of what he calls *Authors of Note*, in his rear. The thickness alone of this Pamphlet can alarm; for his first principle being defective, no reasoning from it can be valid; his foundation being false, his whole superstructure must fall to the ground. He alledges that the Portuguese first stealing and then purchasing slaves thro' an inordinate desire of gain, first raised the same desire in the negroes, and was the origin of slavery there. To prove this point,

* From this must be excepted some trifling abuses of Mercator in the papers, written in the true stile of those inferior Politicians, whose arguments consist of much abuse, and little meaning; of partial extracts, and no general knowledge of the subject; who supply the place of reason with low invectives; who frame a weak argument in their own, instead of the true one in the Author's words, then attack it, and glory in their imaginary conquest.

point, he gives partial extracts from the history of Africa, and omits whatever makes against him. He tells you from Cada Mosto, that the Portuguese landed and stole the natives, but he omits, that Cada Mosto himself, the first time he discovered and landed on that coast, saw an horse among the natives that was valued at fifteen slaves, which were consequently an article, perhaps a medium of trade at that time, which was in 1454; and that he then purchased several at Sanaga. Benezet represents the Africans as people endowed with great talents and virtue, and yet supposes the slave trade is kept up by the advantages we find it our interest to give them. He mentions that the Fuli, a nation on the Gambia, sell no slaves. What an exact character of the British nation would an author give, who should assert, that we would not fight, because one sect among us refused to bear arms! The Fuli may be looked upon in the same light: they are a particular sect, and the doctrine of not selling slaves holds good with them to this hour, as to their own nation; neither can any price tempt them to sell you a calf, though they will dispose of a barren cow for two gallons of brandy. And thus, though they observe their own laws, as to their own people, yet they will sell slaves which they have purchased up the country. Benezet also omits Captain Jobson's account of his voyage up the river Gambia in 1621, when women slaves were offered him for goods, but he refused them, and said the English did not trade in them. So that it is evident, that that trade arose from the Africans themselves, and we are not accountable for the origin of it, notwithstanding this Author's assertion. He talks of the slaves on the river Gambia being sold only for crimes; and yet, in another place, wants every cargo to be released, under pretence, that it is better 500 guilty should escape than one innocent person suffer. Now the impunity of one villain may do more hurt to society than the loss of more than one honest man. All justice is humanity; for without it no nation could subsist; and as the severity of the laws of war, flowing from political justice, cannot be impeached, though in some cases, we might wish them less rigorous, so the case is the same here; one man may have been sold for a slave, who was naturally free, but it is surely a mad project, that for fear in a cargo of 500 negroes, I should have

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one improperly brought by those who sold him to me, therefore I am to let loose 499 thieves and murderers possibly, to prey on the community. To such, and so many flagrant absurdities will an Author be driven who sets up a point, from which he labours to deduce a system repugnant to the allowed practice of Antients and Moderns. He brings in Christianity as abolishing slavery, but unfortunately can find no proof. He draws together into one view all the cruelties which have ever been practised by Captains of ships to deter their slaves from rising; or by the Planters to keep them under subjection; and by following the same rule, and collecting all the instances of barbarity practised by individuals in the most humane and best civilized nation upon earth, such a picture might be drawn, that human nature would start at. His account of the law is no less defective, for he attempts to assert privileges for foreign slaves, at times, when even our own natural-born subjects had no claim to them. He humanely advises us to employ our own natives in the sultry heats of the colonies, and charitably wishes them sunk in the sea, rather than we should carry on the African slave trade for their service. Sure the slaves abroad ought to be under an obligation of working for their living, as well as the natives of England are at home; and in many cases, the latter labour harder and fare worse; they certainly have a severer climate to contend with, as their cloathing runs away with great part of what they want to purchase provisions, and the slaves abroad want little or no cloaths, and are not injured by the intense heat of the sun. The other Writers quoted in the same Pamphlet proceed on the same false grounds, and would persuade us to put an end to the African trade for fear of buying a few slaves, who were fraudulently and unjustifiably made so, which surely is just as wise as if a man should cut off his legs for fear of wetting or soiling his feet. Seduced by this specious side of the question, influenced by humane motives, and misinformed of the real state of the slaves in our colonies, even the Bishop of Gloucester * warns us to send them to their native homes. Poor creatures! Not one would accept of the offer, but would think it the greatest inhumanity to force their return. That in the native Africans' sale of negroes to our shipping,

various

* See his Sermon Feb. 21, 1766.

various frauds have been committed, and persons improperly and unjustly sold; that Masters of ships have been inhumane, perhaps unnecessarily; that Planters have been wantonly cruel without cause, may be supposed from the enormity of crimes among ourselves. To these abuses then let efficacious remedies be applied; and the African merchants will own the highest obligations to government, if by salutary laws it can alleviate the distresses of those, whose labour supports our colonies and enriches our native country; but for the other unnecessary and impracticable scheme of universal freedom, (the device of the Puritans of North America, who now cry out for *perfect* liberty, as they once did for *perfect* purity, till they destroyed all real religion, and ruined both church and state; and who began these their last outcries, as appears by the dates of their works, only on our asserting our jurisdiction over them) from a careful review of laws human and divine, whoever attempts to promote it, must be declared a stranger to both ecclesiastical and civil polity, and an utter enemy to their country.

[E.]

THE benefits that might accrue to England from a trade to Port Hillsborough may be calculated from a review of the returns they made, and all at most reasonable rates.

6 tons of wooll, (to be had in great abundance).

4,000 goat skins.

1,200 deer ditto.

1 ton of orchilla.

8 lb. weight of gold.

200 lb. of ostrich feathers.

1 ton of bees-wax.

} These were only what were saved
from plunder, the inhabitants having
seized on much the greatest part of the
cargo.

[F.]

THE Polly, Captain Walth, a ship belonging to Mr. Adams, struck on the Bar of Bonny this last year, and was soon after attacked by the negroes. The Captain, finding he could not save his

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ship,

ship, sent his boat's crew off, shut himself up in his cabin, and when the King of Bonny and all his people were got on board, to the amount of 1500 and upwards, set fire to the powder; and, Sampson like, at his death punished the treachery of his assailants. To prevent the like fatal accidents in this dangerous river, I here, though somewhat foreign to the purpose of this Treatise, present the African Captains with plain directions for going safely into Bonny or New Calabar.

When you are off Cape Three Points, you will find in going across the Bite you must steer a southerly course, at least S. E. by E. or S. E. and, before you can think yourself the length of Formosa, keep your lead carefully going; and, as soon as you have ground, haul to the southward, and if you deepen your water, you are sure of being to the southward of Cape Formosa, and may bear up to the N. E. till you see the land, and run along shore in nine fathom. In running along shore you will open rivers; they are very small and all open about N. N. E. or N. E. When you are run so far to the eastward as to open Samberera, it is much wider, and opens about N. by W. or N. N. W. and Fochea bearing about N. E. by N. a bluff point; then off the deck you will see no land to the eastward of Fochea, but from your topmast heads, if clear weather, you will see Rough Corner, by some called King William's Castle, bearing N. E. easterly; then run so far as to bring Fochea to bear N. by W. or N. N. W. and Rough Corner N. E. by E. on which you will have four or five fathoms water, and there come to an anchor, if not a proper time to go in. You may go in any time of the tide if you have wind, clear weather, and day light. It flows full and changes E. and W. when you have the marks to bear as above, and bound inwards, you will not have the river Bonny open; however, you may haul up to the northward within a cable's length and a half of the western breakers, and so run boldly in, keeping a look-out from the mast-head for any spits from the western breakers. If it blows any wind, nothing can hurt you, but what you may see. Still as you run in, keep the western breakers on board, and in running in, you will shole in your water to three and three and a half fathom; when you have Fochea W. N. W. you are on the Bar, and immediately will deepen
your

your water to eight, ten and twelve fathoms, on which come to an anchor, and sound for New Calabar. If you go into Bonny, you may run right up, only giving Rough Corner a small birth, and keep rather the starboard shore on board.—In coming out, you must observe the first quarter's ebb sets to the eastward right over the banks, and after that right out S. S. W. In going out, you must make bold with the western breakers, and stand no farther to the eastward than Bonny, half a cable's length, open, and still wider as you turn out. When you are over the Bar, you must be sure to keep the western breakers on board, and that will keep the river well open; for if you stand far to the eastward, you will be puzzled with the patches and shoal water. You must not venture to stand out to the southward, till you have Fochea N. or N. by W.—N. B. When you have made any part of the land between Formosa and Fochea, run no farther than you can see the land a-head in the evening, but come to an anchor. It will be best to come out in neep tides.

[G.]

The following Account of the Abuses in the Management of the Committee appeared in the Public Ledger last April.

April 20, 1772.

THE great importance of the *African trade* to this kingdom, and your readiness to insert in your very useful paper, every commercial information, induce me to request you will communicate to the public, the following circumstances and observations relative to that trade, as soon as possible, in the hope that they may not be altogether useless in shewing the necessity there is, that the bill brought into parliament this session, by Sir William Meredith, entitled, “*A bill to regulate the admission of freemen into the company of merchants trading to Africa, and the election of committee men thereof,*” which stands ordered to be read a second time, the first day of May next, should pass into a law.

In the session of parliament 1749, several petitions concerning the trade to Africa having been presented to the Hon. the House of Commons;

that House did, on the 7th of March, resolve, " That on the 16th of the same, it would go into a committee of the whole House upon the subject of said petitions."

In the 11th and 12th of April following, the House sat in committee, and upon the 13th, Mr. Alderman Bethell, the chairman, reported, among other resolutions of the said committee, " That in order to carry on the *African trade* in the most beneficial manner to these kingdoms, all his Majesty's subjects whatsoever *trading to Africa*, be united into an open company, &c. and a bill was ordered to be brought in for that, and other purposes, of the said petitions.

But many difficulties arising from the distressful situation of the then Royal African company, the bill did not get through both Houses, until the sessions 1750; when it was passed under the description of " A bill for extending and improving the *trade to Africa*."

By the first section of which bill it is enacted, " That all his Majesty's subjects, *who shall trade to or from Africa*, between Cape Blanco and the Cape of Good Hope, shall for ever hereafter be a body corporate and politic, in name and in deed, by the name of the *company of merchants trading to Africa*."

By the 4th section of the said bill, the management of the affairs of the company is directed to be in and by a *committee of nine persons*.

By the fifth section of the said Act, it is ordered, That the election of three of the said committee, for that year, should be by " such of the *traders or persons intending to trade to or from Africa*," who, in order to being admitted to the freedom of the said company, should pay into the hands of the Chamberlain of London, the sum of forty shillings each; Three other of the said committee men to be chosen by *such other of the traders to or from Africa*, who, upon the like conditions, were to be admitted free of the said company, *at Bristol*, and three others by *such other of the traders to or from Africa*, as, upon the like conditions, should be made free at *Liverpool*."

By the sixth section of the said Act, it is directed, That the *elections of committee men* shall be *annual*. By the twelfth section of said Act, it is directed, That all his Majesty's subjects, *trading, or intending to trade to*

or

or from Africa, upon the conditions aforesaid, be admitted to the freedom of the said company.

By the thirteenth section of said Act, the election of the said committee men is directed to be by such persons, as have been admitted to the freedom of the said company, and free thereof one entire year.

If all his Majesty's subjects, without distinction, paying *forty shillings* each, are entitled to be *freemen* of this company, as some contest; how happened it that *London, Liverpool, and Bristol*, were particularized, more than *York, Carlisle, and Gloucester*? Needs there any argument to prove, that it was, because the *traders to Africa*, of whom it was intended this company should consist, were known to reside in the first-mentioned places, and not in the last?

The premises being considered, can any thing be more evident, than that it was the intention of the *legislature*, that the persons composing this company should be such, and such only, as were *traders to or from Africa*; or that the committee men were intended to be chosen only by such persons as, *trading to or from Africa*, were immediately interested in that choice, and in the conduct of the committee? and, that, although by some unaccountable mistake in describing the persons to be admitted free of the said company at London, the vague words *intending to trade*, were inserted, as set forth in the fifth section of said act, not foreseeing the misuse that might be made of them, still as the description of the persons to be made free for Liverpool and Bristol, is absolute, and confined to *traders to or from Africa* only, it is incontestably clear that must have been the design of parliament for all.

Yet so it has happened, that for interested and private purposes, taking advantage of the words *intending to trade*, designing men have found, and used the means to render the influence of the merchants, *really and truly trading to Africa*, in the choice of committee men, of no effect; for under colour of *intending to trade to Africa*, (the contrary of which admits of no other proof than by inference from circumstances) and generally even without that pretence, such numbers of persons have been made free of this company, that 1425 names stand now registered as free-men thereof, for London alone; although it is a fact known, and no-

torious

torious to every person in the African trade, that the actual traders from London to Africa, at this day, are not more than 50, at the uttermost; and that including them, the entire number of persons, free of the said company, who have at any time since the passing the beforementioned act, to this hour, been traders to or from Africa, from the city of London, does not amount to more than 100.

It may throw some farther light upon this subject, to observe, that the annual admission of freemen into the said company, stands by their books as follows:

In 1750	-	118	1760	-	2	1770	-	340
1	-	20	1	-	14	1	-	274
2	-	11	2	-	15			
3	-	2	4	-	8	Yrs. 2		614
4	-	6	4	-	4			
5	-	2	5	-	71			
6	-	2	6	-	111			
7	-	9	7	-	165			
8	-	0	8	-	226			
9	-	1	9	-	24			
Yrs. 10		171	Yrs. 10		640			
		First Ten Years,						171
		Second Ten Years,						640
		Last Two Years,						614
		Total						1425

That of the 274 made free in the year 1771, no less than 194 were made free in one day, *i. e.* the 2d of July in that year, for the obvious purpose of influencing the election in 1772. And of the whole 274, *not ten* were, or are *Traders to Africa*.

Upon a farther investigation of the names of persons entered as free-men from London, it appears that among them there are about twenty members of the House of Commons, eighteen East India directors, six counsellors, ten attorneys, five physicians, five surgeons, twelve stock brokers and stock jobbers, eighteen tradesmen of the company serving them

them with goods, (one of which is the hon. gentleman that opposes the present bill) four that are or have been their secretaries or clerks, thirteen merchants clerks, many Custom House clerks, East India company's clerks, some not yet of age, great numbers made free without their knowledge and without their expence, cheefemongers, journeymen weavers, shoe-makers, taylors, barbers, alehousemen, pastry-cooks, paviors, and in short almost every denomination of the lowest mechanics and tradesmen, exclusive of near four hundred persons, of whom, after a very particular enquiry, even the occupations cannot be known, and of whom the residence was so very obscure, that at the election in 1771, when the number of freemen was only 1043, near two hundred letters were returned to the candidates from the post office, as addressed to people who could not be found.

That *such* could be the persons intended by the legislature to compose the company of *merchants trading to Africa*, requires an equal degree of folly to conceive, and assurance and absurdity to maintain.

Liverpool did in the year 1771 send out ships and goods to the coast of *Africa*, sufficient for the purchase of 29,250 negroes, and the number of freemen for that town was 88. *London* sent out ships and goods for the purchase of 8000 negroes only that year, yet the number of freemen for that city is 1425.

To point out by whom, and for what corrupt ends these iniquitous measures have been used, or for what sordid purposes they are now defended, is a task too invidious for the writer of this letter to engage in, unless the public service may hereafter require it; in that case you will hear again from, Sir, your most humble servant,

A M E R C H A N T.

The following L E T T E R S appeared soon after.

Bristol, April 25, 1772.

I N the LEDGER of the 22d of this month, I read a letter signed a M E R C H A N T, setting forth, in some degree, the importance of the *African trade*, and the abuses of the acts of parliaments relative to it, particularly in the election of *African committee men for London*. He might also

also have mentioned *Bristol* and *Liverpool*. I wish the *Merchant*, who seems to understand the subject, (as far as relates to facts in England) had entered farther into the matter, and told the public the great abuses every day practised by the governors, or chiefs of the forts on the coast, to the great detriment of the fair trader: That the valuable trade on the Gold Coast will certainly be lost to the British merchant, and the forts totally ruined, unless some good regulations take place soon: That the forts, such as they are, servants, slaves, and soldiers, (these last are kept in a most wretched state) are all, and have been for some time past, according to their several abilities, employed for the emolument of a few people, who command at the forts, and their friends in London. I have been several voyages to that part of the world, and know these things; but it would be impolitic in me to let my name be known at present, for obvious reasons; as I purpose to make another voyage. The people who now monopolize the cream of the Gold Coast trade, have the public stock to trade upon. The forts which cost the nation, to the old royal African company, upwards of 100,000*l.* serve them as houses and warehouses without rent; the servants, as well whites as blacks, are all employed as their agents, and factors, to buy up the slaves, gold, &c. without wages. By these great advantages they can deal at least 20 per cent. on better terms than the merchant adventurer, who has all these necessary conveniences to provide, at a very great expence. Nay, I shall venture to say, the public-money granted annually by parliament, 13,000*l.* (which I see by the votes is augmented this year to 15,400*l.*) as it is managed, militates against the fair trader, which it was originally intended to serve, by keeping the forts in a respectable condition. This public-money is invested in prime goods, such as is ordered, and wanted for the better assortment of the trading chiefs, who divide the cargoes among themselves, and in shameful proportions, immediately on the arrival of the store-ship, or ships; this division, they say, is to pay them the advance they are in for the public. By such artful schemes of keeping the company in debt, which need never be, (and I suppose but few of the free-men of the company know they are liable to) they endeavour to sanctify their proceedings. I have no ill-will to any man on the coast, yet I think

it my duty, as a good subject and free trader, to throw in my mite of knowledge, as it may possibly draw the attention of some one man in power to lend his aid towards reforming and regulating, perhaps, the most useful and beneficial commerce this nation now enjoys, considering it in all its views.—It employs great numbers of our poor manufacturers, and our colonies cannot exist without negroes.

The legislature, I observe, is taking much pains to regulate the *India company* and their affairs. Query, whether the African trade is not of more *solid advantage* to the nation, than the *East India trade*, or might be made so?

The East Indies produce a great deal of partial riches, which has an evident tendency to overturn our happy constitution; whereas the African trade diffuses, like gentle showers, its kindly benefits throughout all the British dominions; I am a speculative man, though now a seaman, and could enlarge on this copious subject.

What I have now committed to paper, are the serious genuine thoughts of an honest tar, without order or method. If you, Mr. Printer, think proper to publish them in your useful paper, perhaps they may do some service to my king and country at this critical time.

A F R I C A N U S.

N. B. The legislature should send *half-pay-officers* to govern and keep the forts in a respectable condition. They are bred to acquire honour, not riches by trade. Such a regulation need not cost the public a penny more than the present allowance. An honest, sensible, disinterested committee have power to do much good.

London, June 4, New Lloyd's.

HAVING much time upon my hands, I went frequently to the house of commons this session, to get some knowledge of what the guardians of the nation's welfare were doing, for the service of the public; and to gratify my curiosity with the sight of some men, whose conduct in parliament I have read of in the West Indies, where I have a plantation, that maintains my family in England with comfort, not splendour.

Amongst the other important business of the house, was brought in a bill to regulate the *African trade* of the Gold Coast, which drew my attention more particularly, as all the slaves on my plantation are from that part of Africa, which certainly produces the best; for, being inured to labour in their own country, they can work on our sugar-canes immediately after their arrival. I took some pains to enquire what the real design of the bill was, and also to know the grievances complained of, as I might be affected by it. I soon learnt sufficient to wish the bill might pass, as, in my opinion, it tended to lower the price of slaves, but was much surprized, as well as hurt, to find it did not. I have since continued my inquiries after facts, and think the knowledge I have got, from African captains of ships and others very conversant in the trade, may be of some use to the ignorant, who meddle in these matters. Therefore I venture, for the first time, to put my thoughts in print. I hope this essay may be well received, as it is well intended; I know no party, nor am I interested a penny in the African trade.

In the first place, though I am a freeman of the African company (it is not necessary to say how I became so) and was made to vote at the last election for committee-men *as a tool*, I am now sure I did wrong, through surprize and ignorance, as the act of parliament expressly says, none but *actual traders*, and *such as intend to trade to Africa*, are eligible to vote for committee-men; therefore, as I neither trade or intend to trade, I shall not vote again, though I am interested in the prosperity of the trade eventually, by the purchase of negroes annually from the traders for my plantation, and this I wish to do on low terms. But as the affairs under the direction of a committee are now managed, I despair of getting any Gold Coast slaves again, on reasonable terms, unless some regulation takes place. From the information I have had, it is very clear to me, that the public money granted annually by parliament, for keeping the forts in respectable repair, is employed to very different purposes; and the forts, which ought to be open for the safety and protection of all British traders and their effects, are monopolized, and used entirely by the governors and their creatures to carry on an extensive trade for themselves, and their connections in the committee at London.

The

The convenience of the public money being vested in the best goods at the desire of those governors, their living rent free, having servants of all sorts without wages, or charge of maintenance—nay, having salaries from the public for doing worse than nothing, (business for themselves expressly against the laws) the free merchant certainly cannot trade within 20 or 25 per cent. with those people, as *they* can afford to give 4l. upon a slave more than the merchant adventurer, who must hire places on shore to transact their business, servants, &c. at great charge, beside the vast expence and delay of their ships, which must lie by and rot, till these monopolizers ships are first served, and get away. This being the case, I cannot expect slaves again at a reasonable price, until this iniquitous scheme is broke through: which must be done by an act of the legislature, as I find the board of trade have not power to do any good in this matter. They were applied to by petition of the *principal merchants in the African trade*, some time last winter, wherein was set forth, that five men, who had alternately been committee-men for London, had entered into a written combination, to support, at a mutual expence, one another, and exclude all the other freemen from that office. The answer the board of trade gave the merchants was, that, on consulting their lawyer, they found the acts of parliament did not empower them to grant the prayer of the petition (which was, to exclude those persons from ever being committee-men again). As these things are so, I firmly believe, the free trader to that part of Africa where the forts are must be materially injured, and the West India Planters of course hurt, by being obliged to pay an advanced price for their slaves.—These combinations, at home and abroad, have still a worse tendency, as it puts the advance price into the pockets of the black brokers, who are a very artful, indolent people, and content themselves with bringing fewer slaves to the water-side for sale, when they see, by the folly of the white men, that they can get as many goods *now* for one slave as they used to get for two.

By what is here set forth, the public must see, that I suppose a trading connection subsists between some of the African committee and their governors on the coast; this I certainly do, and I believe it can, and will be made fully appear, when the ministry have time to think

about the African trade, which I am sure is of more real advantage to the nation than any of them seem to imagine. I confess I speak feelingly as a Planter, and think this great commerce (which takes off about a million and half value of our home manufactures annually) would be better attended to, if there were a few nabobs amongst the traders, who could have influence at elections of members of parliament.

The acts of parliament relative to the African trade appear to me to be made on a very liberal plan. A committee was instituted, purely to see that the public money, annually granted, was laid out honestly and sensibly in keeping the forts in good repair, to aid the British merchant, and to awe foreigners as well as the natives.—*The committee (who should certainly by the spirit and intention of the act be chosen by real traders) have the appointment of all the governors of the forts and other servants.*

The legislature has granted, since the year 1750, upwards of 300,000*l.* for repairing and keeping the forts in a respectable condition. The enquiry should naturally be, has that money been employed properly, according to the intention of government? What I have learned, and from good authority, is, that there are but two or three of the eleven forts, viz. Cape Coast Castle, and Annamaboe, that are in any sort of repair; the others in a most ruinous condition; and, I am well informed, would, and ought to have been evacuated long since, if they were not found convenient to lodge a man or two to carry on trade for the chiefs.

The bill brought in by Sir William Meredith, and lost by inattention, would not, in my opinion, have answered fully to the just expectation of the fair trader, nor what he expected from it, as it only meant to regulate the election of committee-men, which Sir William hoped would make the fountain head pure,—as he supposed the actual traders would chuse honest, disinterested, public spirited men, to manage the public money, and cherish the fair merchant.

Human nature, I am sorry to find it, is so easily corrupted and blinded by self-interest, that I think it best to endeavour to prevent an evil, by keeping temptation as much as possible out of the way of individuals; therefore, I am for having an act of the legislature for explaining and amending all the former acts. I would suffer no man in the public service

vice to trade for a penny on the Coast ; nor any but *real traders* and free-men to vote at any future election for committee-men. Send regular military gentlemen, of unblemished characters, to command and have the care of the forts ; many such, and now on half-pay, might soon be found, that would thankfully accept of the appointments, for three years, and then to be relieved by others : sending factors and writers, is absurd, as it is no trading company ; a storekeeper is necessary, who should give security for the faithful distribution of the stores under the inspection of the chief governor, who should be a captain at least in his Majesty's service, to reside at Cape Coast Castle, and rank as major in Africa, with 1000l. per ann. salary, and power to act as a justice of peace. The other forts to be commanded by inferior officers on less salaries. There should be an able engineer sent from the Tower, to have the immediate direction of the repairs of the forts. Such kind of regulation would be sensible, and effectually remove any jealousy in the merchants, and need not cost the public more than the present allowance. I throw out these hints for others to improve upon.

I am told there are not less than fourteen hundred people who are made free in London, to vote at the next election for African committee-men, and not above fifty real traders amongst them, who, if the act of parliament was properly understood, have a right to vote. Shameful prostitution of an Act so well intended ! Surely no gentleman will vote that is not an actual trader. Tools must do as they are bid.—What can induce men of any credit to take such unwarrantable steps to get into the management of public money ? It surely cannot be the small salary only.—The men that will probably be chosen next month, and by creatures of their own making, are, I am told, well known ; and I hope, if chose, will next winter be brought before the tribunal of the public, to account for their conduct ; I shall bear a part in it as

A WEST INDIA PLANTER.

P. S. Why do not the real African merchants of London, Bristol, and Liverpool, nominate and support three proper people, for each place, to be their committee-men ; and instruct those that are chose, nay, require it of them, to make the necessary regulations on the Coast ?

That

That there was solid grounds for what appeared in the papers was plain from the following memorial.

London, June 11, 1772.

At a meeting of the society of Merchants trading to Africa from this port,

Resolved,

That the memorial of the merchants of London trading to Africa, presented to the Rt. Hon. the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations on the 17th of March last, be published for the better information of the public touching the grounds of the said bill, and to prevent any future misrepresentation of them.

To the P R I N T E R.

S I R,

I N compliance with the above resolution I take the liberty to inclose you a copy of the memorial therein mentioned, and to request, by order of the society, you will be so obliging to publish the same, and am,

S I R,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN PETER DEMARIN.

No. 31, Bread-street.

To the Right Hon. the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations.

The Memorial of the Merchants and Traders to *Africa* from the Port of London, whose names are hereunto subscribed,

Humbly sheweth,

T H A T by an act passed in the 23d year of his late Majesty, entitled, "An Act for extending and promoting the trade to Africa," it was among other things enacted, that all his Majesty's subjects who shall trade to or from any of the ports or places of Africa, shall for ever hereafter be a body corporate and politick, in name and in deed, by the name of the Company of Merchants trading to Africa.

That the direction and management of the affairs of the said company should be by a committee of nine persons, to be chosen annually by such of his Majesty's subjects, trading or intending to trade to or from Africa,

as should, upon payment of the sum of forty shillings each, be admitted freemen or members of the said company, and free thereof for the space of one year.

The act also directs three of the committee-men to be chosen by the freemen of the said company, who should be made free at Liverpool; three others by the freemen of the said company, who should be made free at Bristol; and three others by the freemen of the said company, who should be made free at London.

And by the said act, the commissioners for trade and plantations are authorized and impowered, from time to time, in case any of the said committee-men shall be guilty of any misbehaviour, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, to remove any of the said committee-men, first hearing them as to the truth of the charge against them, and to give notice to elect others, in the room or stead of those so removed.

In conformity to the intention of this act, most of his Majesty's subjects then trading to or from Africa, from London, Liverpool, and Bristol, became freemen of the said company at those places respectively, and proceeded to the election of nine committee-men, who agreeable to the directions of the said act, in consequence of such choice, became invested, in behalf of the said company, of all the forts, castles, canoe-men, castle-slaves, military stores, &c. possessed theretofore by the Royal African company of England, together with the power of governing, maintaining, and preserving the same; the right of appointing all officers, civil and military, that should be necessary for those purposes; and of disposing of such sums of money, as, for the purposes aforesaid, government should think fit to grant, and which it has since very liberally given.

In the succeeding years many more of his Majesty's subjects trading to Africa, and among the rest, the far greater part of your memorialists became freemen of the said company, reasonably hoping thereby to have that influence in the choice of committee-men, that it was obviously the design of the legislature, and necessary to the good of the African trade, they as traders to Africa should have.

But so it has happened, through the arts of designing men, that neither the votes of your memorialists, nor those of all his Majesty's subjects trading,

trading to Africa from London, would be sufficient to procure the office of committee-man of that port for any person, however fitly qualified; for under a pretence that these words of the said act, "Traders or intending to trade to or from Africa," prescribed no limits, but that any person, being his Majesty's subject, might and ought to be made free of the said company, upon payment of forty shillings each, to the use thereof; such numbers, without any regard to the distinction of trading or intending to trade to Africa, have been admitted to its freedom, that all opposition on the part of the real traders thither, to such iniquitous proceedings, can be of no avail; the actual traders free of the company in this city not being more, as your memorialists are well convinced, having carefully examined the list of freemen of the said company for London, published in July last, than 100 at the most, although the number of persons then free thereof appears by the said list to be 1043; and there have been since that time so many more persons made free, that the total number of persons pretending to have a right to vote for committee-men for London at the election for the year ensuing, is now increased to 1425; much the greater part of whom, so far from being African traders, are not even known to your memorialists; and of those who are known to them, great numbers are evidently by their professions, such as Counsellors, Attorneys, Physicians, Surgeons, Stock-brokers, and Stock-jobbers, not likely to be traders to or from Africa, or to have any intention to trade thither; others they find to be tradesmen serving the company with the goods purchased with the public money; their Secretary, and even their Porters; persons not yet of age, and of the very lowest stations in life, not made free at their own request, or at their own expence; and sometimes even without their knowledge: and with so little disguise or pretence to any regard for the rights of your memorialists, or reverence to the laws, have such disqualified people been made free, that your memorialists are well informed a single person has recently presumed to send in a list of 160 names of people at one time, that he desired might be admitted to the freedom of the said company, and has had them made free accordingly, although scarce any of them were legally qualified.

Your

Your memorialists have also authentic proof that the committee-men for London, for the present year, Mr. James Johnson, Mr. James Mill, and Mr. Samuel Bean, did enter into an agreement on the 12th of September, 1770, with Mr. James Bogle French, and Mr. Gilbert Ross, then committee-men for the said port, in the following words:

“ It is agreed between Mess. James Johnson, Gilbert Ross, and James Bogle French, together with Samuel Bean, and James Mill, that the expences attending the last African election, respecting freemen, &c. shall be an equal charge between them: And it is further agreed by the parties, that they shall unite their whole strength upon the next and every succeeding election, in support of three of the above, as stipulated underneath, reserving a right nevertheless to Mr. Sam. Smith, as being one of the candidates when his affairs admit of it, or he has made a respectable dividend to his creditors, Mr. Samuel Bean in that case having agreed to relinquish to Mr. Smith.

Signed,

JAMES JOHNSON,
JAMES BOGLE FRENCH,
GILBERT ROSS,
JAMES MILL,
SAMUEL BEAN.”

Manifestly seeking thereby through the most corrupt means and illegal combination to constitute themselves perpetual committee-men for the port of London, in the most direct violation of the rights of your memorialists, and others, the traders to Africa from that city, and to the utter perversion of a statute framed on the most liberal principles, and tending to the greatest commercial advantages.

Your memorialists therefore complain of the said Mr. James Johnson, Mr. James Mill, and Mr. Samuel Bean, the present committee-men for the port of London, for having done an act so subversive of, and prejudicial to, their rights, and those of all the traders to Africa from this port, and for being guilty therein of misbehaviour, contrary to the true intent and meaning of the act before in part recited.

And therefore pray that you will be pleased to order them to be removed from being committee-men any longer for the port of London, and to direct that a new election of others in their room may be had

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under

under such regulations as shall prevent the repetition of so flagrant an abuse of the intention of the legislature, and so injurious to that trade, the protection and extension of which were the great objects of its care.

<i>Samuel Bainbridge</i>	<i>Samuel Gist</i>	<i>William Barber</i>
<i>Alex. Stevenson</i>	<i>Samuel Smith</i>	<i>John Hamilton</i>
<i>Kender Mason</i>	<i>Gilbert Franklin</i>	<i>J. Warner Phipps</i>
<i>James Tweed</i>	<i>Arthur Jones</i>	<i>Geo. Clarke</i>
<i>Ellis Needham</i>	<i>John Shoolbred</i>	<i>Thomas Philpot</i>
<i>James Lone</i>	<i>John Peter Demarin</i>	<i>John Barnard</i>
<i>Robert Sorbie</i>	<i>Anthony Bacon</i>	<i>John Townson</i>
<i>Peter Bostock</i>	<i>Christopher Court</i>	<i>William Hindley</i>
<i>Ben. Kenton</i>	<i>William Wilson</i>	<i>Gerrard Teise</i>
<i>Swete Wood</i>	<i>Hugh Connor</i>	<i>Robert Vigne</i>
<i>John Macmillan</i>	<i>William Wilton</i>	<i>Michael James</i>
<i>Patt Power</i>	<i>Charles Connor</i>	<i>John Pickett</i>
<i>Robert Eyre</i>	<i>Robert Macmillan</i>	<i>James Hambrough</i>
<i>Miles Barber</i>	<i>Henry Poole</i>	<i>Nicholas Lutyens.</i>

After this it would be an injustice to a very eminent and very worthy merchant, not to insert his vindication of himself from having any hand in such sinister practices as the committee-men's agreement. Their making a sort of reserve for his being of the committee was probably done to keep him, if possible, from exposing the improprieties in their conduct, which they must be sensible he was well acquainted with; and that it was not with any real purpose of serving him he clearly shewed by cutting off all possibility of objection by the certificate of those gentlemen, who had the inspection of his affairs.—The following letter appeared in the Public Advertiser :

S I R,

THE society of merchants trading to Africa from this port having published in your paper the memorial by them presented to the Lords of Trade and Plantations on the 17th of March last, relative to the abuses which have obtained in the choice of African committee-men for some time past, and there being in that memorial set forth an agreement, dated September 12, 1770, wherein

I am mentioned in such manner, that it may be supposed I was a party thereto. In order to prevent any such misapprehension, I think it expedient [to declare, that agreement was made without my knowledge, and that I never heard thereof until April 1771, when several of my friends thinking it proper I should offer myself a candidate for the office of an African committee-man at the election then ensuing, I went to one of the five gentlemen who had signed the agreement aforesaid to solicit his vote and interest, having, as I imagined, reasonable ground for the expectation of both from him in support of my pretensions. This gentleman, to my great surprize, told me he could not comply with my request; and upon my pressing him farther, produced the agreement abovementioned as the cause of his refusal. I had no sooner read it than perceiving it was prejudicial to my reputation, and injurious to the public in its manifest design, I expostulated with him upon its contents, but to no purpose; he replying, that in this case he would not go from his engagement, nor could he give me any assistance until, agreeable to the tenor of it, "I had made a respectable dividend to my creditors." I confess it appeared a little extraordinary to me that these five gentlemen should be so exceedingly careful of matters in which they were no way interested. Determined to strip off this mask, I remonstrated that I could and should have made a very respectable dividend to my creditors, had not the gentlemen inspectors into my affairs thought it proper, through uncommon friendship and confidence in me, to send out to Africa to assort my effects there, goods to a considerable amount, purchased with the money appertaining to my estate, instead of dividing it immediately amongst the creditors, who had consented to their doing so and invested them with the power necessary for that end. That this might not rest on my word alone, and to remove, as I thought, any objection, I applied to the gentlemen appointed inspectors into my affairs, who, with their accustomed goodness, gave me the following testimony in writing:

"These are to certify whom it may concern, that Mr. Samuel Smith, of the Old Jewry, merchant, as an act of justice and prudence towards his creditors, as well as his own family, stopt payment; we, as principal creditors, at the desire of an unanimous general meeting, took upon us the inspection and direction of his affairs."

“ On examining his books, which were settled in a very few days, we found every transaction regular and fair, and have not since on farther examinations found any errors.

Upon the balance of his affairs it clearly appears that he ought to have, after paying all his debts, a very good fortune remaining without taking into the account any profits arising from his extensive trade to Africa.

That he has more effects at his settlements, and on board his ships now at Africa and America, than will pay all his debts, which is acknowledged by his partner Richard Brew, Esq; of Annamaboe, who intends to send off slaves sufficient for that purpose in the course of this and next year.

Being satisfied of Mr. Smith's integrity and good conduct, also of the honour and honesty of his partner Mr. Brew, we (agreeable to the powers invested in us) have sent out upwards of 20,000*l.* value in goods, &c. to assort the goods in his factories on the coast of Africa, which, together with 11,000*l.* actually paid to creditors who had securities, would have reduced his debts more than one half.

As Mr. Smith has acted with so much honour, resolution, and diligence, to do justice to all the world, we think him eligible to hold and exercise any employment of reputation and trust.

London, April 30, 1771.

C. BIRCH,
THOMAS SUTTON,
ROBERT ALLEN,
ALEXANDER ANDERSON,
MARTIN PETRIE,
CHARLES EASTGATE.”

One would have thought, after producing this certificate, every objection or difficulty on the part of the five gentlemen who signed the agreement would have been obviated and removed, but it had no such effect. They continued to support each other, and were the chief people who opposed my election last year, for reasons best known to some of themselves, and more than guessed at by the merchants concerned in the African

African trade, and by me, who have had the honour of being formerly a member of the African committee for London and Bristol several years.

I am,

Your most humble servant,

Old Jewry, June 30.

SAMUEL SMITH.

[H.]

Extracts from a Pamphlet published by Mr. Tweed, a Gentleman who resided upwards of Fifteen Years in Africa, which shews the miserable Condition of the Forts, the Arts of the Governors, and other Abuses worthy attending to, on the Coast.

I Come now to a point which I hope will merit attention ; as I dare say administration, and the nation in general, have understood it, and looked upon it, in a very different point of view to what it really is : I mean the situation of the forts and settlements on the Gold Coast of Africa. I am sorry to say, that they are in almost every respect a disgrace to the nation. They lie like a heap of rubbish—a nest for filth and vermin — without influence, degraded and stigmatized, as mere burlesques on fortification ; laughing stocks for Europeans, and the derision of the natives. Instead of supporting the dignity of the nation, they sully and disgrace it. The governors or chiefs, tamely and dispiritedly, have suffered British subjects to be grossly insulted, nay *flogged*, under the muzzles of their guns, in sight of their half-starved centries with arms in their hands ; and have bore the insults of the haughty natives, when with menaces they dared them to resent it. And so greatly dispirited are these poor wretches of soldiers, that they are the next step to inanimate beings. The poor pittance of putrid salt provision which they are allowed, though they pay very exorbitantly for it, *contrary to the allowance and intention of government*, is scarce sufficient to sustain life ; and their meagre pitiful countenances plainly indicate the scenes of misery and want to which they are subjected ; having often had the misfortune of being lorded over by a set of unfeeling beings, whose hearts are steeled against sympathy, and every other Christian or social virtue. Wealth is the deity they worship ;

worship; and do they only accomplish that end, national honour, national interest, or national influence, are quite beneath their consideration. They receive a salary for doing their own business; and the warehouses, craft, and servants of the public, are all subservient to their ends and purposes. From this general rule, there may, no doubt, be some exceptions; but it is manifest, and past all contradiction, that it has been too often the case; and it can easily be made appear, that instead of the forts being in any degree serviceable, or their chiefs affording any succour to the British trader or interests, they have, from their self-interested views, been highly detrimental to it by obstructing the shipping in their purchases.

It will naturally occur to ask, from what means these complaints and grievances arise, and under whose care and management the African affairs are conducted and carried on? The answer of course must be, that there is a committee chosen by the merchants, who are by act of parliament admitted, for the more effectual extension of the African trade, on paying in to the committee's secretary forty shillings, and half a crown for perquisite. The majority of suffrages in this body constitutes a committee-man: but though the intention is originally good, it is often like other matters of the kind basely subverted to sinister purposes. For instance, a tooth-drawer or mountebank, on paying this paltry sum, becomes qualified to vote for whom he may be influenced, even for the ordinary of Newgate, or sexton of St. Giles's, should they put up as candidates: indeed, had ever either or both these personages been chosen, their knowledge of Africa would only have proved tantamount to many of the respectable gentlemen who have filled that office; and, if we may judge from *their* conduct, would neither have exposed themselves so much, or would have committed such arrant blunders. But to proceed—This committee is to consist of three for London, three for Liverpool, and three for Bristol. They are to superintend and manage all the affairs relative to the public forts and settlements in Africa (Senegambia excepted) and to give such directions and orders to the governors and chiefs, as may be conducive to the national interests and credit abroad. They, in consequence, are to indent for such stores and goods as may be thought
need-

needful to be sent out, either as repairs or other maintenance of the forts ; but it is an indisputable fact, that these committee gentlemen have often, nay generally, been connected with the governors and chiefs abroad, on the trading system ; by which means such a natural sympathy has subsisted between them, that the supplies have been wisely calculated for very particular purposes, as well as considerable assortments sent over in the same bottoms, for which the public pay freight.

When parliament established the committee, it was enacted, that the accounts relative to their disbursements should be audited before the Exchequer ; and also, upon proper notice by advertisement, they should submit them to the inspection of any number or committee of their constituents : but so much has this valuable branch been neglected, that they have been left to their own direction, and have no doubt availed themselves of it.

Since the commencement of the present peace, our natural enemies and rivals the French have been assiduous, and have used every piece of chicane and low cunning, whereby to worm us out of the trade ; by insinuating to the natives, that if they could by any means get quit of the English, they would put it on a very advantageous footing for *them*. The natives very shrewdly answered, that the English were the most likely to extirpate themselves ; because, if they kept bidding upon each other, they would soon *over-do* themselves.

The Africans are in general crafty, cunning, great masters of dissimulation, sedulous in accomplishing their ends, volatile and bigotted in their opinions, unstable in their friendships, treacherous where interest intervenes, dupes to luxury, great lovers and admirers of pomp and gaudiness, though naturally mean in their dispositions. They are prone to passions, very resentful ; but they would rather wait for a fair opportunity to be revenged on their adversary, *by taking an advantage*, than to afford him a fair chance. They are almost generally and naturally thieves, though they are loth to be discovered ; but, what is rather remarkable, when matters are put under their trust, they in common prove faithful.

The management of the Governors of the Forts merits attention : The governor of Cape Coast having a salary of 800l. per annum, the

gover-

governor of Annamaboe 400l. and the other chiefs 100l. each, which they pick and cull out of the primeſt, and moſt commanding articles, ſent out by the committee, on which they trade for themſelves, and the governor of Cape Coaſt always having contrived in the courſe of the year to bring the public in his debt, by charging repairs for the forts, and other etceteras, as alſo for arrears paid to his predeceſſor, which ſwallows up almoſt the whole ſupply ſent out in the annual ſhip by the committee; and this they urge as ſome excuſe for treating the inferior ſervants ill, by paying their ſalaries in reſuſe goods, and often employing the clerks, ſerjeants, nay even the ſoldiers of the forts, to act for them in the inland parts, and by their influence with the natives, preſents made, and other machinations, they obſtruct and intercept the purchaſes of the ſhipping, and the regular courſe of trade; while the poor unhappy ſoldiers, inferior ſervants, and low artificers are paid with the dregs of the goods; by which they are barely able to purchaſe a very ſcanty pittance of the worſt, and moſt putrid ſorts of proviſions; thro' which hardſhips they ſpin out the miſerable reverſion of a life not worth enjoying, and which rarely exceeds an annual period.

The ſhipping, being clogged with heavy outfitts, wear and tear, intereſt of money, inſurance, &c. are often obliged to pay the chiefs perhaps from fifteen to twenty, nay twenty-five per cent. advance on all the ſlaves they buy of them, notwithſtanding they have little or any riſque, and have fire, candles, lodging, and waſhing, beſides ware-houſes, labourers, artificers, canoe-men, magazines, canoes, and every expence of the fort found them at the public expence. Neither coarſe goods or brandy ſufficient are indented for by the governors; and part of the proviſions which have been ſent out, by *apparently* authentic intelligence, have been ſold to the Dutch for gold, which is the governor's private emolument, while the ſoldiers and inferior ſervants, are kept half the year in a ſtarving condition, their wages being paid them in goods that have been bandied from fort to factory, till they are in an unſaleable ſtate. On what they can procure for theſe they muſt live, or ſtarve for want; an alternative ſhocking to thought, and a diſgrace to humanity. The quantity of Engliſh brandy ordered out annually from the committee,

tee, not being above 8 to 10,000 gallons, and the consumption at least 20,000, the surplus is found by the committee's servants; for which they pay themselves out of the prime articles of the goods, charging at the rate of six shillings per gallon for what costs twenty pence, exclusive of another very advantageous brewery, which, if report (and I mean no paltry report) is true, upwards of twenty per cent. is advantaged by it. From this circumstance it is demonstrable to a certainty, that there is a loss to the public annually, of upwards of sixteen hundred pounds.

The article of Portuguese tobacco they also make a pretty advantage of, as the committee's servants, and soldiers have been generally paid one fourth part of their wages and salaries in it, and their slaves one half.

This tobacco, from authentic accounts, may and has been laid in from Portuguese ships at about three pounds sterling per roll; but when bought with filefias or cowries, at about thirty-five shillings per roll; and the governors of Cape Coast have *by their indents* availed themselves of this circumstance, having a salvo ready in excuse, that these articles were intended for the Whydah settlement. This tobacco, when it happens to be a commanding article, is sold to the servants and soldiers at two shillings and six pence per fathom, or six pounds five shillings per roll, each roll running from fifty to sixty fathoms. This being purchased with public supplies, brought on shore by the committee's canoes and servants, it would appear but reasonable, that the public should reap the advantage of all such bargains. On a supposition, that it would require five hundred rolls per annum to supply all the forts, this might be purchased (*communibus annis*) for cowries, at thirty-five shillings per roll, which will be about nine hundred pounds sterling for the whole; and as it is retailed to the servants of every class at two shillings and six pence the fathom, or six pounds five shillings the roll, amounting in the whole to three thousand one hundred and twenty-five pounds, Coast currency, or two thousand two hundred and thirty pounds sterling, it will appear that upwards of one thousand three hundred pounds sterling is annually lost to the public on this article.

Besides the articles of brandy and tobacco, the governors reap no inconsiderable advantages from the long coarse goods, as such are only adapted

for purchase of provisions, the prime forts, as has been pointed out, being rendered subservient to more interested purposes. Now suppose we only allow the sum of five hundred pounds sterling which might be saved, by sending out coarse goods in room of striped taffaties, pullicats, &c. whereby they rival and overbid the fair trader; this, with the annual sums which as before specified might be saved on the brandy and tobacco, would amount to upwards of three thousand pounds per annum saving to the public; which sum, I should humbly presume, would be an object well worthy animadversion on the present system, being, as can be proved, founded on notorious facts, and the calculation under what with truth and propriety it might be carried to.

As I must adopt two different methods, whereby to remove the evils so obviously set forth, I shall first begin with a supposition which, I think, will be highly necessary; that is, to put the forts in a proper repair; this apparently being the first object to be considered. With regard to defending and garrisoning them afterwards, military gentlemen would be best, as they have neither natural, or we will suppose any acquired ideas of commerce, and, if sent out under proper restrictions and regulations, think there appears no ill consequences to be dreaded from their interfering in that respect; and consequently the slaves and other produces, now forestalled and monopolized by the forts, would circulate among, and be purchased by the shipping and fair traders, at near twenty per cent. cheaper.

The troops garrisoning the forts should be relieved punctually every three years; and a tax might be laid on slaves and ivory, in order to aid the payment of the military establishment, and keep the forts in repair. The military gentlemen could be supposed to have no intrigues with the natives relative to trade, nor would make use of any chicane, whereby to worm the shipping or fair trader out of it; at the same time they would settle and compromise any disputes between their white people and the natives, with more impartiality and candour than people whose self views in every respect have influenced the conduct, and who have been rather apt to foment than to suppress disturbances and jealousies. The captain general or commander in chief might be invested with all the

powers of a justice of the peace, and have a true and authentic journal kept of all the transactions, civil as well as military, which may occur; copies of which should be transmitted, signed by him, to the secretary of war, and of trade, or to some of the secretaries of state.

From the defence private traders would receive from the military, and on which they could rely, they would be induced to settle, and extend their trade; as from them they might expect some succour; whereas from the committee, and their servants, they have too often experienced the perversion of their schemes, and subversion of their trade in general.

On every emergency the forts, while under military government and direction, would be more properly defended, the nation's honour and reputation would appear with more conspicuous eclat, the persons and effects of adventurers would be better secured and protected, and they would on all occasions have the chance of receiving more assistance from the military gentlemen, than any other.

A military force would awe the seamen and natives into a more regular and implicit obedience than the present civil establishment could do; and would prevent mutiny and desertion among the ships crews, which so frequently happen, and prove destructive to voyages in that country.

His majesty's troops, from being well supplied with provisions, well clothed, kept clean, and properly exercised, would continue more vigorous and healthy, and in sickness would be better supplied with medicines and nourishment, than a set of unhappy creatures, who experience nothing but misery, rags, stinking provision, and unwholesome liquors; by which means, I am well informed, that near forty out of forty-eight soldiers have perished from the beginning of March to the end of May 1770. But this should not alarm or deter the troops, as the climate on the Gold Coast is in general wholesome, only the misconduct before specified accounts for the great and sudden mortality of the people, which catastrophe might in future be much alleviated, as the country produces excellent fish, poultry, and other fresh provisions, as also greens, fruits, and roots of a salubrious and refreshing nature.

Should these assertions have any weight, and be adopted, I am convinced matters would be much altered for the better to what they

now are, and some small tax on the purchases of the shipping might be laid towards maintaining the forts.

All orders for years past, sent from the committee, are not only loosely worded, but they leave their servants to explain the acts of parliament in such manner, as may conduce to their own private ends and purposes, consequently they have been quite disregarded, acts of parliament have been set aside, and these gentlemen have acted as if subordinate to no restriction, regulation, or controul.

The ruinous situation of the windward trade is obvious, slaves being now purchased there at upwards of double the price to what they were in the year 1756. Numbers of lives have been lost by boats and vessels being cut off, and their crews wantonly butchered by the natives with impunity, aided and assisted by a set of white renegadoes, who have abandoned their country, and relinquished every degree of honour, honesty, and order.

The great and principal bane to the windward trade has been the French contracts for negroes since the peace, as the English contractor was, by the agreement stipulated, laid under a heavy penalty on demurrage of the French ships; by which means he was drove to the necessity of sending craft into every river and creek in the country, in order to procure slaves at any, if ever so extravagant, a price; of which the natives soon discovered how to avail themselves. The other ships in the trade were consequently obliged to follow the same rules, by which the natives became enriched, of course haughty and insolent, the shipping made ruinous and destructive voyages, sometimes so far as sinking the whole; the seamen by going up the rivers, consequently exposed to the scorching heat of the sun by day, and the chilly stinking fogs by night in these unhealthy and inhospitable regions, soon lost their lives, and the nation was deprived of a number of hardy brave fellows, who, if preserved, might have proved of infinite service to their sovereign and benefit to their country.

This branch of trade, if under proper regulations, might prove very serviceable and beneficial to the nation. As there are a great many very populous empires and kingdoms extended along the coast, and reaching above six weeks journey inland, these districts are governed by princes of a warlike

a warlike and atchieving turn, consequently a number of negroes and other commodities must come to market, and would greatly conduce to the consumption of our manufactures, at the same time that, *by contracts with foreigners being abolished*, and our trade carried on in our own bottoms, and imported into our own colonies, we should soon bid fair for being the principal, if not the only exporters of any note; and foreigners must apply to us in a courteous manner, for the African produces of various sorts. The contracts with the French employed several hundred tons of their shipping, consequently, must have been very detrimental to this maritime country. *The French officers and seamen became well acquainted with all the soundings, harbours, and conveniencies of the country*, and by their artful insinuations, tinsel presents, and sly scrutinies, they became acquainted with and favourites of the natives, taking that opportunity to pave the way against a future day, when they should throw off the mask, and become adventurers themselves.

I shall here give a brief abstract of the terms, on which the contracts were formed, and submit it to public consideration.

A. contracts with B. for (we will suppose) fifteen hundred negroes, deliverable in twelve months, at four different periods, and at the stipulated price of 22l. sterling for every merchantable negro; two-thirds of these to be males, one-third females.

On the delivery of three hundred and fifty negroes the assortment will run one hundred and twenty prime men, not to exceed twenty-seven years of age, as near as can be judged; eighty boys, four feet four inches and upward; thirty-four boys, from three feet ten inches to four feet three inches; seventy women, not to exceed twenty-four years of age, according to the judgment of the parties; twenty-five women girls, that is, between women and girls; twenty-one girls, from four feet to four feet three inches. In case A. cannot fulfil this agreement, he obliges himself to pay and account for to B. 9l. sterling for every slave he falls short in the stipulated number. The ship which B. sends to receive these three hundred and fifty negroes, is by agreement to remain two calendar months on that part of the coast, where the parties agree to send her; during which time, should not B. be able to furnish the stipulated quantity of ne-

groes, before the expiration of the two months after the ship's arrival, the ship must lie at the rate of 30l. sterling *per diem* demurrage: and for the ratification of the general terms, and conditions of the agreement, the parties become bound in the penalty of 5000l. sterling.

From this it is obvious, that the English contractor must furnish the slaves at any advanced price, rather than incur the penalties stipulated. To descend to a particular circumstance, which may serve to illustrate the matter; in the year 1763, negroes could be purchased for sixty to seventy bars, on an average; one cargo in particular was laid in at fifty-four bars, consisting of two hundred and eighty to three hundred and forty slaves: whereas, from the before specified causes, they have, since that period, rose to the amazing price of one hundred and twenty bars, which is almost one hundred per cent. in the space of seven years.

To remedy this let it be ordered, First, That the captains of his majesty's ships who shall be sent on that station, shall be directed to enquire of the agents of Bance island, in the river Sierra Leon, and of the masters of such ships as may be then trading on that part of the coast, the names, places of residence, and characters of all the white residents in the country, and to consult with them, *who are*, and *who are not*, detrimental to the trade; as there are some of probity and worth among them, it would be unfair to put them on a level: after this scrutiny, let them be commanded *in his majesty's name*, and *as his subjects*, to repair on board the king's ship, and be made acquainted with the resolutions, to which they must be obliged to pay the most strict compliance. And as it is probable they will urge the necessity of some time to settle their affairs; and realize their effects, I would propose, that this indulgence should be made to extend so far as the exigency of their affairs, upon proper proof, would require: and to leave hostages for their removal against the time appointed. The hostages, should they not be redeemed before the king's ship departs, to be put in charge of the agents of Bance island, or on board such ship or ships, as will see the agreement punctually ratified, otherwise these hostages (whom we will admit to be a part slaves) shall for the first transgression of their principal, be indulged with two months

months grace ; but, if not properly released in that time, to be *confiscated*, and their value appropriated to public use.

Secondly, As it is presumptive, that the natives will endeavour to screen and protect the white men in their several districts, the white men being some of them their *pandars* in villany, the men of war must in that case stop some of the natives who are freemen of either that nation or some nation adjoining, which will procure the delivery of the white men, on telling the natives, *that king George has demanded, and must have his people.*

Thirdly, It would be highly necessary to have a tenable well built fort on cape Sierra Leon, where nature has already done a great part of the work, and where wood, stone, and other materials, would with easy labour be got near at hand to carry on the works ; while the Oyster banks of Commaranka, but a small distance off, would supply shells whereof to make lime. This fort might be easily garrisoned by part king's troops and black men trained to arms, and might be so constructed, as to command the channel into the river, as the ships must come within two or three musquet shot of it ; at the same time that it would scour the woods, and prevent the approach of an enemy on one side, while the other face and bastions would prevent any of their ships from advancing or landing from the southward.

Fourthly, I would propose that this fort should be commanded by a chief governor and deputy, with a secretary, clerks, and warehouse-keeper ; a proper engineer, with masons, artificers, and labourers, to carry on the works ; and the governor and principal officers to have genteel salaries, sufficient to maintain them without trading.

The warehouses and slave-rooms should serve as safe places for the shipping, and other adventurers to lodge their goods in ; and all disputes between white people and the natives, should be settled and adjusted, by the interposition and mediation of the governor and officers of the fort.

Fifthly, The governor of the fort should be allowed at all times to purchase rice and other provisions, and should sell what overplus could be spared from the use of the fort, to the shipping, on being allowed either a commission or reasonable profit on the same.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, That every ship trading within one hundred leagues, and every other adventurer within that district, should pay ten shillings sterling, on every slave they purchase, and five shillings on every hundred weight of ivory, which should also go towards the maintenance of the forts, &c. and should be paid in bills drawn on the ship's husband by the respective captains or purfers of the ships there trading, to the order of some person or persons in England, appointed to receive and manage the same; and the captains so to bargain with the natives, as to make them allow this tax in the price of the commodities. Bance island, being a fortified settlement, to be excluded in every respect from these taxes, or other regulations, except what may affect the prices and police necessary in trade, which will be the advantage of the place to observe.

Seventhly, That every master of a trading vessel, on finishing his trade, shall furnish the governor with a true account of his purchase in slaves, ivory, camwood, &c. specifying the time he has lain on the coast, the average prices every article has cost him, and the number of men he may have lost by mortality or otherwise; all which to be transmitted, signed by the governor, to the board of trade, and if needful submitted to public inspection. The ship's name, the port she belongs to, and the ship's husband's name should also be specified, and an account sent home twice every year. By this means, the board of trade, and the nation in general, would have it in their power to discern, with some degree of certainty, what advantage it would be of, and adventurers would be able to regulate their measures accordingly.

Cape Sierra Leon lies in as healthy and pleasant a situation as is to be met with in Africa. The river abounds with various kinds of delicious fish, the forests yield great variety of lasting and useful timber, tropical fruits, palm wine and oil; and the opposite shore of Bullom furnishes rice, poultry, greens, roots, and fruits in great abundance, some goats and sheep, as well as plenty of deer, wild hogs, and buffaloes, which are also to be found on the mountains of Sierra Leon — Lions, tygers, jackalls, and elephants abound in the woods, but seldom prove offensive in the settlements. At the fort they might raise hogs, poultry, and cattle in abundance, and jack-asses might be brought from the Cape de Verd islands,

to

to bring stone, sand, and materials to the fort. On the whole, it is a place naturally situated for a protection to shipping and trade, which might be extended under a safeguard much further, and to greater advantage than it has ever yet been. In war-time particularly, it would be highly serviceable, as upwards of two hundred sail of shipping might anchor in good ground under *tuition* of the fort, and be supplied with good water and other conveniencies from the shore.

As to the province of Senegambia, I shall only beg leave to make one remark regarding that settlement, and I think it is a very striking one. The wise scheme of government to secure the gum trade, so useful in our manufactures, has been in a great measure defeated by the avarice of self-interested men, who have sent gum from Senegal directly to foreign markets, and have imported foreign goods from foreign ports, contrary to act of parliament, and to the great detriment of the fair trader. These are well known facts, and which may be easily remedied in future.

My observations I have made from an experience, resulting from almost twenty years connection with that country, sixteen of which, all but three months, a resident in it.

I shall now conclude with only observing, that whatever administration or body will exert themselves in redressing the fatal inconveniencies to which the trade is subjected, will merit the applause and good wishes of their cotemporaries and fellow subjects, as it will be the means of giving bread to thousands, and an advantage to posterity.

I hope (before I die) to see some great man in power, who will make the immense continent of Africa his study, from whence commercial advantages may arise to Great Britain, far beyond our present imagination; but this subject would be a volume of itself.

Letters from Richard Brew, Esq; to several Merchants at Liverpool, pointing out the abuses of the Committee and their Servants, and wishing for another Establishment.

Castle Brew, Annamaboe, July 1, 1770.

G E N T L E M E N,

I Am much pleased to find by your letter of the 28th of February, that the African merchants of London, Bristol and Liverpool, have at last taken the alarm, and seem determined upon such alterations as will put this once valuable trade upon a more eligible footing than it has hitherto been.

In my last to you upon African affairs, I promised to furnish you with some more hints, relating to the present establishment, and will now endeavour to illustrate a few of the most striking; to convince you how necessary a change in the present system is towards preserving this trade to the British Nation, and putting the forts and settlements upon a more respectable footing.

From the commencement of the present system of government, in the year 1750, to October 1763, when Mr. Bell quitted the Coast, I dare venture to affirm, there has not been less than thirteen thousand slaves purchased and sold at Cape Coast Castle, and from October 1763, when Mr. Mutter commenced governor, to the present July 1770, I will also take upon me to say, there has not been five hundred slaves purchased at that place; a melancholy circumstance! that the trade of our principal settlement on the Gold Coast should be so shamefully neglected and reduced in so short a space of time, and that, by the supineness (not to call it by a worse name) of our late governors, our Dutch neighbours should be suffered to engross so considerable a part of this valuable trade.

As you will be naturally led to ask why those gentlemen should neglect their own interest, and not use all the means in their power to improve their fortunes by fair trade, I will take upon me to give you the only and true reason.

When a gentleman succeeds to the government of Cape Coast, his fortune seldom amounts to more than 1500 or 2000l. and this sum with his emoluments

emoluments as governor, he finds barely sufficient to defray the contingent expences, and furnishings of tobacco, rum, &c. for the first year; and indeed those expences have been so enormous for these seven years past, that great as the emoluments of the governors are, they have been scarce sufficient to support the forts, from the sailing of one committee's ship till the arrival of another: therefore, as it is plain their capitals are not sufficient to carry on trade, and to defray the excessive expences of the forts and buildings, which are and have been carrying on for these last seven years, one or the other must be given up; and as it is notorious every governor of Cape Coast makes at least 3000*l.* sterling certain, by his furnishings and other no less shameful methods, we are not to wonder that he prefers these methods to trade, which is attended with trouble, risque, and expence, and the event is often precarious; besides it has been the practice of every governor for these seven years past, to invest every shilling he could possibly spare (from his furnishings, before mentioned) into up country, or what we call Duncoe slaves, which are immediately put on the works, and the public charged 12*l.* per annum for each; so that it is impossible to expect trade can ever flourish again at Cape Coast, whilst the governors are permitted to interfere, directly or indirectly, with the repairs or buildings, which may be found necessary from time to time to be carried on.

A proper engineer with a handsome salary, a sufficient number of surveyors and assistants should be sent out, all under his direction, and the whole management of these affairs entrusted to him.

Since the spirit of engineering first seized our governors, they have pulled down many buildings which, if timely attended to and repaired, would have stood many years to come, and have built other works, some of which are so vilely constructed, that they are tumbling down already, and have been propped up these three years past; they have enlarged the castle by near a quarter, are now building a horn work on the rock Tabra, part of which they have taken into the old fort; in short so many additional works have been, and are still to be carried on, that I question if twelve years will compleat what is now planned out, and to what purpose, except to make the fortunes of four governors more, I cannot di-

vine. The works of CapeCoast Castle are already so extensive, that they would take at least five hundred men to defend them, and yet there is not a decent room in the Castle for a stranger, except the governor parts with his, nor a room for a gentleman in the garrison, that is water tight in a hard shower of rain, and yet these gentlemen are all professed engineers, and will talk of a bastion, ravelin, horn work, covered way, &c. with as much facility as either a Vauban, or a Coehorn. Talk to a governor about trade, he tells you he does not trouble his head about it; that he makes more money by pulling down an old wall, than by buying or selling one hundred slaves.

I am much obliged to you for the copy of the committee's letter to the governor and council at CapeCoast relating to the factories; the letter is certainly a very proper one, and well calculated to remedy the evil complained of, but these gentlemen pay no more regard to any thing which is wrote them by the committee, than if they were Lords-paramount of the whole coast of Africa.

The committee, by prohibiting their servants from shipping off slaves on their own accounts, imagined they had fallen upon the most effectual method to restrain and keep them within due bounds, but experience has shewn us the contrary; as the annual ship, and many others, carry off annually great numbers of slaves; some in a private manner, others in the face of mankind, bidding defiance to all laws and regulations established by the committee; and others again, under the denominations of dead men's effects.

Since the forts were vested in the committee, it is well known, that every governor who went home realized his fortune in slaves, notwithstanding all orders and restrictions to the contrary: permit me, therefore, to ask you, if it be of any consequence to the British merchant, whether these slaves are shipped off in June or January, this year or the next, so as they are permitted to send them off at all; and whether it does not appear, that this door was left open on purpose to serve their private ends, as I can name more than one (and these the most active and oldest standers) in the committee, through whose hands the greatest part of the remittances for those very slaves have passed.

Whenever

Whenever a governor is preparing to leave the Coast, he distributes his goods amongst the chiefs of the best trading forts, and gives them as good a price, and a much greater assortment, than any master of a ship can afford to do: upon this occasion, he launches out all the prime goods he picked and culled out of the supplies, so that till the whole is disposed of, your ships must lie by, or your captains raise the price of slaves, to the ruin of the trade and fair trader. A striking instance of which we now have at Whydah, where the governor is realizing his fortune in slaves, and has sent the surgeon of the fort up to Annamaboe to agree with a captain of a ship to go down there and carry him and his slaves to the West Indies; and he has accordingly agreed with Captain Hamilton, of the Jamaica store ship, to go down to Whydah the beginning of June, to carry the governor and one hundred and fifty slaves certain to the West-Indies; so that, till his purchase is made, Captain Norris, of the ship Unity, of Liverpool, (who is now there) must lie by, or take up with such slaves as he can get, as we are to suppose a gentleman will ship none but the primest, when they compose the bulk of his fortune.

I am credibly informed, the committee have adopted a plan (sent them by the governor and council here) for the building a new fort at Whydah, within the old one; that materials are daily expected, and bricks ordered to be made at Whydah for that purpose.

That such a proposal should come from the governor and council here does not at all surprise me, as the governor for the time being will have the furnishing of all contingencies till the building is compleated. But that the committee should implicitly give into such a measure, without first consulting their constituents, astonishes me greatly.

It is notorious that the fort at Whydah since the commencement of the present establishment has been of no manner of service to the British trade, notwithstanding it has cost the nation at least 20,000*l.* to support it, in that period of time.

The gentlemen of Liverpool have been the only adventurers from England to Whydah since the year 1750, and I fancy they have reaped very little advantage from the fort, in all the voyages they have successively made there since; they are obliged to hire factories in the town,

to lodge their goods and carry on their trade in ; they are also under the necessity to hire free people to carry their goods from the water-side to the town, (at least three miles) at an immense expence, and are frequently robbed of great quantities of goods in the passage by the very carriers ; all which losses they are obliged to put up with, as our governors there have not influence sufficient with the King of Dahomy to procure the least redress, even though they were ever so well inclined to demand it.

Every body acquainted with this trade must allow, that lodging merchandize of any kind, especially liquor and gunpowder, in a thatched house, is attended with a very great risque ; so great a one indeed, that I am informed, Governor Dalziel asked Captain Norris of the *Unity* ten per cent. to insure his factory during his stay there ; how true this is I cannot pretend to say, however Captain Norris will, no doubt, clear up this point on his arrival in England.

By perusing the Whydah accounts I believe you will find there are above eighty Castle-slaves there ; it is well worth enquiring how these slaves are employed, and why they cannot be hired to the English captains to carry their goods from the water side, as we are to suppose they are immediately under the command of the governor, and could be deterred from pillaging in the way from the waterside to the factories ; I would also be glad to ask why the captains of ships have not the liberty of lodging their goods and carrying on their trade in the fort, as well as the chiefs, and if this liberty is denied them, how is it possible the fort can be of the smallest advantage to the shipping ? Influence the governor has none, being as much in the power of the King of Dahomy as if the fort was situated a thousand miles inland ; if his Majesty should take it into his head to send for the French, English, and Portuguese governors at 12 o'clock at night, there is not one of them hardy enough to refuse the first summons. He knows his own interest too well to exclude any nation from trading at Whydah, even tho' they should have no fort there ; two instances of which I remember myself within these two years past, two Dutch ships having flaved off there, and were as well treated as if they had a settlement ashore. It is, therefore, my humble opinion, that if strict orders are not sent to employ the castle-slaves there as carriers for
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the captains of ships, and to allow them liberty to lodge their goods and slaves in the fort, and to carry on their trade there, that the committee had better send out a quantity of gunpowder and blow up the present fort, instead of building a new one; but if they should think proper to grant the above mentioned indulgencies to free-traders, I would then humbly propose that instead of building a new fort, ware-houses and slave's rooms should be added to the present building, which may be done at a very inconsiderable expence, and this fort would answer every purpose, as well as one ten times larger and stronger: from it's situation it serves only as a mark of possession, and the largest fort you can possibly build in the same place can do no more.

The building a fort at Cape Appolonia was another very injudicious step of the committee, as it was from that place principally masters of ships were supplied with gold to carry on their trade at Annamaboe, when the markets here were overstocked with goods.

Before a fort was built there, the masters of ships sold their goods to the natives at a profit of at least 35 or 40 per cent. on an average the year round, and very seldom failed of procuring gold sufficient to go thro' with their purchase of slaves at Annamaboe, but since the fort was begun and a chief appointed, it is notorious, goods have never averaged even 10 per cent. at that place, and very little gold has been purchased by the shipping at any rate.

The chief of that fort, in the absence of ships and long boats, picks up every ounce of gold at the water side, so that when vessels arrive there, the masters have no resource but to trade with him upon his own terms; what these are, I shall insert at the end of this letter, having had proposals from the present chief Mr. Williams to send him up goods at the prices there mentioned; besides, it is more than probable, if you either stop with your ship or send your boats, the chief has parted the day before with all the gold he had by him, either to the Dutch, French, or Portuguese, as there are few vessels that use this trade, but what stop there in their way down the Coast; you must also expect that the gentlemen in the committee's service (who know the value of gold as

well

well as the private trader) will have the preference of the chief's trade, whilst they sell their goods at as low a rate as they do.

When it was resolved to erect a building at Appolonia, a block-house and not a fort was ordered to be built there; 7000*l.* only was granted by parliament for that purpose, and Colonel Bramham gave in the plan, which was sent out here by the committee; but instead of complying with the act of parliament, and the orders of the committee, the governor and council here altered the original plan, and instead of a block-house set about building a fort very near if not quite as large as Annamaboe fort, which has already cost the nation double the sum allowed by parliament, notwithstanding the committee sent out a second order to contract it; this is not all, the fort now built must be supported at a very considerable annual expence, altho' it appears that instead of being serviceable to trade it is of the greatest detriment imaginable.

The fort is built in such a situation, that it is almost as much in the power of the inhabitants as the fort at Whydah, the landing being so very terrible as not to be approached (without the utmost hazard) above three months in the year. The number of slaves bought there is so very inconsiderable as not to deserve notice, and the quantity of gold purchased at Appolonia annually by English, Dutch, French, and Portuguese, I am very confident does not amount to 3000*l.* sterling; admitting therefore, that two thirds of this sum falls to the share of the English, and that they sell their goods at even 25 per cent. profit on an average, it will appear that we are only 500*l.* per annum gainers by that trade; is it not therefore very surprising, that the committee would put the nation to the expence of 15 or 20,000*l.* to build a fort, which must be supported at an annual expence of 7 or 800*l.* sterling, without once enquiring into the nature of the trade, or the advantages that would accrue to the nation from such an undertaking?

It will possibly be objected, that if we had not built a fort at Appolonia, the Dutch would; but this is very unlikely, as they have a very fine fort at Axim, within three or four leagues of that place, and notwithstanding (as I before observed) all nations who trade to the coast used frequently to touch at Appolonia, and trade in common with the

Dutch, they never attempted a settlement there; but it happening a few years ago that the governor of Axim quarrelled with the principal man, or Caboceer at Appolonia, and the latter (dreading the governor's resentment) applied for protection to the governor of Cape Coast at that time, and entreated that he would represent his case to the committee, and get them, if possible, to build a fort at Appolonia for his protection; this was accordingly done, and they, without ever procuring or even demanding security for the Caboceer's allegiance or good behaviour, or entering into any commercial treaty whatsoever with him, came into all his proposals; the consequence of which has been, that as soon as he found the fort was half finished, he compromised matters with the Dutch, and now carries the greatest part (if not the whole of his trade) to their fort at Axim.

Till I received your letter of the 28th of February, inclosing me copy of the committee's letter to the governor and council, we did not hear a syllable of that affair, those gentlemen are grown so extremely secret in all their transactions; the factory at Agah, established by Mr. Bell, was withdrawn in a very silent manner, and I am told, the other factories are or will be soon evacuated. The committee however forgot, that although they prohibited them from settling factories on shore, they may still employ craft to trade at every one of those places they before occupied; you will therefore, I hope, not forget this circumstance when once the regulations come under consideration.

To such a pitch of audacity were the chief governor and chiefs of out-ports arrived before this order came out, that Mr. Grosse employed Mr. Gibson, a factor in the committee's service, and paid by the publick, to transact his business near three months at his factory at Mumford. Mr. Drew, the chief of Winnebah, had seldom less than two of the committee's servants at two factories he had established; Mr. Trinder, the chief of Tantomquerry, employed the serjeant of his fort at a factory he had at Lagoe, and Mr. Williams, chief of Cape Appolonia, sent his second (Mr. French) in a long boat of ours all the way to Bassam to trade for him.

You will, no doubt, be surpris'd at the effrontery of these gentlemen; first, in establishing factories which they were sensible would not be
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allowed; and secondly, in employing the committee's servants who are paid by the publick to do their business for them.

If the people who are thus employed as factors can be spared from the forts, why is the establishment loaded every year with such a number of useless hands? The governors and chiefs are constantly complaining that the parliamentary allowance is not sufficient to defray the annual expence of the forts, and yet they are racking their brains to find out new employments to gratify their dependants, and those gentlemen who transact their private business for them.

I dare aver, there is not an English fort upon the Gold Coast but may be taken any day in the year by six men, the capital not excepted, and yet seconds, serjeants, gunners, and soldiers, can be spared to go trading for their chiefs, and the forts left destitute of people for their defence.

In the month of April, 1769, the governor of Cape Coast Castle had not as much gunpowder in the fort as was sufficient to fire the morning and evening gun, and was under the necessity of applying to Commodore Tonyn in his majesty's ship *Phoenix* for a supply, notwithstanding the *Cæcilia* store ship, Captain Dunn, brought out a very considerable quantity of gunpowder the preceding February, for the defence of the forts, but it happening to be an article much wanted in trade at that time, it was immediately divided and sold out upon slaves.

Annamaboe fort was just in the same situation when Commodore Tonyn examined it; there was not a single grain of powder in the fort but what belonged to this house, and out of which they took as much as saluted the commodore on his landing and going away; I having found eight kegs empty upon withdrawing our gunpowder from the fort magazine, for which I never received any restitution, and which has deterred me ever since from lodging any more there, especially as the committee have refused to order their chiefs to give receipts, or be accountable for any thing lodged by a private trader in the forts, notwithstanding proper application has been made to them for this purpose; thus are we deprived of the benefit of the act of parliament, which allows us the liberty of lodging gunpowder, gold, ivory, gums, drugs, &c. at all times in the forts. I therefore leave you to judge from the above circumstance, what protection, or assistance, a private trader has to expect either from the
committee.

committee or their servants : a committee, several of whom are so biased in favour of their good friends and correspondents on the Coast, that you may depend they will always strenuously oppose all regulations which may tend to lay any restraint on their trade.

As I have touched upon the word protection, give me leave to recite an affair which happened at Lagoe, (last August) a town within range of the guns of Tantomquerry fort : Mr. James Lane, a private trader, carried on business in that town for some years past ; he supported an excellent character, was remarkable for buying good slaves, which he generally sold to the British shipping in Annamaboe Road, to the number of about two hundred and fifty annually ; this poor man, for twelve months before he died, enjoyed a very bad state of health, and at his decease in August last was supposed by most people to be worth at least 2000l. sterling.

As soon as the town's people heard of his death, they immediately broke into his house, and carried off the greatest part of his effects ; none of which (as far as I can learn) have ever been recovered from them, nor any steps taken to bring those villains to justice. If such outrages as these are committed under our forts, and the perpetrators suffered to enjoy unmolested the fruits of their rapine ; we may as well have no forts at all.

Can any thing be more glaring than the partiality of the committee in allowing their servants liberty to lodge *their slaves, goods, and all their effects whatsoever* in the forts, in preference to the private and fair trader ; in making them umpires and judges of their necessities, and in winking at all their malpractices whatsoever ? I dare to say, that the committee never sent an order to their servants here, for these seven years past, tending to lay the least restraint on them or their trade, but what they have shamefully and scandalously infringed ; they have shipped off slaves in great numbers, in the most public manner, traded with both French and Dutch, imported from time to time immense quantities of goods, some have even been concerned in shipping, and whenever an opportunity offered of distressing a private trader, they never let it slip ; they have settled factories wherever there was a prospect of purchasing a slave, or an acky of gold, employed the committee's servants who were paid by the public for these purposes, to oppose and

rival the private and fair trader, leaving the forts destitute (as I mentioned before) of people for their defence, and disposing of the very gunpowder sent out from time to time by the committee for their protection.

It may possibly be objected by the committee and their friends, that you have nothing more than my ipse dixit for what I here advance. I have therefore to request, that the commander of his majesty's ships on this station next year be ordered to take my affidavit, respecting these affairs, should my candour or veracity be questioned, as all post captains are as I am told justices of peace upon their stations.

I forgot to tell you in its proper place, that the gentlemen, factors, and others in the committee's service, indeed all but the chiefs, experience infinitely greater hardships than even private traders, for notwithstanding the governor trades none himself, he acts the dog in the manger, and will not suffer a soul to buy a slave or sell a gallon of rum upon any account whatever; if any are hardy enough to peddle a little rum in a negroe's hut in town, and should be so unfortunate as to be discovered, he may give up at once all thoughts of promotion in the service, as this is looked upon of all others the most unpardonable offence a man can be guilty of; an instance of which happened a few months ago at Cape Coast, where the serjeant of the fort (having previously obtained his discharge) settled in town, and traded upon what little he had saved in the service, chiefly in rum.

When the above circumstance was made known to the governor, two gentlemen were immediately dispatched into town, to let the serjeant know that as he was a foreigner he had no right to settle under an English fort, and to demand the keys of his ware-house, the delivery of which he refused, upon which they immediately broke open the ware-house, entered and took out two hogheads of the poor man's rum, which they carried into the castle.

Some time after they sent to let the serjeant know he might have his rum by sending for it, but he refused to meddle with it, intending to lay his complaint before Commodore Tonyn on his arrival at Cape Coast.

When the commodore arrived, this poor man was ill or from home, I can't recollect which, so that he had not an opportunity of preferring his

his complaint, till the commodore was as low down as Cormantyne in his way off the coast. I happened to be that day with Mr. Tonyn, and heard him express his abhorrence of such arbitrary proceedings, and his concern that he was not made acquainted with the affair before he left Cape Coast; he, however, immediately wrote to Captain Burr of his Majesty's Sloop Hound, lying then at Cape Coast, to make a proper enquiry into the affair, the result of which was (as I am informed) that many pretences were trumped up by the governor and those two gentlemen to justify their proceedings to Captain Burr. I shall, however, endeavour to get a copy of the serjeant's case, which I shall send you with some other papers by the next conveyance, to convince you how improperly this is called a free and open trade.

The Liverpool gentlemen I find are not singular in preferring a military establishment on the Coast; the Londoners I am informed have concurred with them, and from the out-lines of the plan sent me lately from thence, it appears to me of all others the freest from objections, for the following reasons.

First, That as trade is incompatible with the profession of a king's officer, the slaves, which are now purchased by the forts, would in case of a military establishment circulate amongst the shipping, and would be bought 20 per cent. cheaper than they are at present.

Secondly, That there is infinitely a greater probability of receiving protection and assistance from the military gentlemen than any others.

Thirdly, That the forts and settlements would be supported in a much more respectable manner and kept in a proper state of defence, by which the persons and property of the private traders would be rendered much safer in case of a war, either with Europeans, or natives, than they ever can be whilst in the hands of a committee.

Fourthly, That the military gentlemen would settle all differences between the Europeans and natives, in a much more impartial manner than we have a right to expect from the servants of the committee, who have always endeavoured to foment those differences, as best suiting their own interest.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, That great numbers of adventurers would settle under the protection of the military, from whom they had something to hope, but would be deterred from any such attempts under a committee and their servants, from whose envy, malice, and ill-will they had every thing to fear.

Sixthly, That the king's troops would be well paid, well fed, cloathed and looked after in a proper manner, and in case of sickness would have proper medicines and the necessaries of life administered to them; whereas the poor wretches sent out by the committee have nothing on earth to support or comfort them in sickness or health, but a rasher of salt beef, stinking New England rum, and Portuguese tobacco, by which means forty soldiers have perished at Cape Coast out of forty-eight, from March the 1st to the 28th of May, all of whom came out in the Jamaica Store-ship, Captain Hamilton, and arrived here about the middle of last February.

Seventhly, That ship's crews, who are generally very mutinous on this Coast, would be kept in much better order by the military than any others.

But as the plan for a military establishment is liable to one grand objection, * viz. the great expence of supporting the forts and settlements garrisoned with king's troops, it is more than probable it will not be adopted. I therefore beg leave to remind you of the plan I laid down in my former letter, of allowing the governor and chiefs handsome salaries, as an equivalent for prohibiting them to trade in slaves, and should this plan miscarry also, what do you think of following the example of the Dutch company, by giving liberty to the servants of the committee to trade as extensively as they please, under the following restrictions?

First, To tax them twenty shillings sterling for every slave they dispose of on the Coast, or send to the West Indies.

Secondly, To swear all the servants of the committee every six months, who are traders, to render a just account of all slaves disposed of by them.

Thirdly, To allow them liberty of shipping off their slaves, or selling them on the Coast as they shall think proper, also to import any quantity of goods they please to the Coast.

Fourthly,

Decreasing the number of the forts would remedy this.

Fourthly, To send out proper engineers, surveyors, and assistants to keep the forts in repair and erect what buildings may be found necessary, that all these matters be put intirely under their direction, and that no governor, or chief whatsoever, be suffered to interfere with them.

Fifthly, That the private traders and chiefs of forts be put upon a footing with each other, with regard to the number of slaves and quantities of goods to be lodged in the forts, and that the latter shall not be suffered on any account to judge of the necessities of the private and fair trader.

Sixthly, That no factories be suffered to be established by any servant of the committee either on *shore* or *afloat*, and that no governor, chief, or other servant whatsoever, be suffered to employ any craft, except such as are for the repairs of the forts, and transportation of the supplies.

Seventhly, That the governor and chiefs shall pass receipts for all kinds of European goods or African commodities, as are lodged by private traders in the forts, slaves excepted, and to be accountable for the same.

Eighthly, That every 3d of July, the committee for the ensuing year be regularly sworn not to receive or pay a shilling of money for any of their servants or any person for them, directly or indirectly, nor that they, nor any body for them, shall be concerned in any manner with any of them, during the time of their being members of the committee, nor that they, nor any person for them, shall form any mercantile correspondence with any of them during said time.

Ninthly, That every governor and chief in the service shall give sufficient and undeniable security in England for the punctual performance of these and all other orders which shall be thought proper to be sent them from time to time by the committee, and that such security shall be *sued for and recovered*, in case of failure in any of them.

I have already shewn you, that these gentlemen have, for these seven years last past, run counter to all orders, restrictions, and regulations established by the committee, have set aside acts of parliament, and have acted in all respects as if they were subject to no controul; therefore, as you have no manner of security either from them, or the committee, that the same game will not be played over again, you cannot possibly tye them up too close.

close in case it is found expedient to suffer them to trade at all; but upon the whole, the military establishment would be attended with fewer inconveniencies.

Since writing the foregoing I am credibly informed, that Mr. Drew has purchased a sloop from Captain Maxwell of Bristol for sixteen slaves, which the said Maxwell bought a few days before from Captain Hamilton of the Jamaica for fourteen, which is a proof that those gentlemen are determined to have factories one way or the other, notwithstanding all the committee can write to the contrary.

From what I have said concerning the committee and their servants, it must naturally be supposed I have many enemies amongst them. I also know there are many gentlemen in London, Bristol, and Liverpool, who imagine I have nothing in view (by these representations) but self-interest; I cannot therefore conclude without assuring you, there is not a man in England who has less to ask or hope for from the committee than myself. I have found long since that I had neither protection nor assistance to expect from them, and immediately set about building all manner of conveniencies, such as slave's rooms, powder magazines, warehouses, lodgings, &c. to render myself independent of them, and I have now (I thank God) the heart-felt satisfaction to declare, I don't know any thing in their power to grant, which I stand in need of; permit me therefore to ask, what views I can have in taking all this trouble, but to be of service to the publick and the trade in general, and if my endeavours are crowned with success, I shall think myself very sufficiently recompenced. I am with perfect esteem,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD BREW.

I am just now informed, that the Cape Coast Serjeant got to Winnebah time enough to see Commodore Tonyn, before whom he deposed to the truth of what I have inserted, relating to the treatment that poor man received from the governor of Cape Coast.

The following is a copy of a letter I received from Mr. Robert Johnston, a private trader at Winnebah, with his deposition.

S I R,

S I R,

Winnebah, June 15th, 1770.

AS I am informed that you are sending home a state of the Coast affairs, I must request that you will insert a copy of the inclosed deposition, which I did propose taking when Commodore Tonyn was last at Winnebah, but was prevented by a severe fit of sickness; I however intend, please God, to swear to it before the first Captain of a man of war that arrives on the Coast. I have also made bold to trouble you with another relating to Mr. Drew's proceedings with regard to raising the price of slaves, &c. you know one instance of this kind, having turned out one of his predecessors, the late Mr. Hippisley. I hope this will come to hand before you send away dispatches.

I have also to inform you that, notwithstanding the committee's order, Messrs. Drew and Trinder still continue their factories. Mr. Drew keeps a white man at Cormantee Accra, (Richard Butler) about four miles to windward of Tantum fort; Mr. Trinder's is at Lagoe, where he kept a soldier belonging to the Company till he died there, which happened about three weeks ago, and he still keeps his factory in charge of a black man in the house of the late Mr. Lane; and Mr. Bennerman, who is now settled at Lagoe, told me not a week since, that Mr. Trinder has declared that he would keep possession of that house, only to keep others out. Mr. Mill kept his at Shidoe, till I sent down my young man, and six days after his arrival there, Mr. Mill sent and withdrew his man from that place. I remain with esteem,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

ROBERT JOHNSTON.

The Deposition of Mr. Robert Johnston, Merchant, at Winnebah, which was to have been taken before George Anthony Tonyn, Esq; Captain of his Majesty's Ship Phoenix, in April, 1770, but was prevented by sickness.

THIS day personally appeared before me, Mr. Robert Johnston, merchant, at Winnebah, and maketh oath on the Holy Evangelists, that on or about the 10th day of June last, an up country trader came into town with three slaves, and put up at the house of Bundee Cooma, one of

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the principal inhabitants ; that the said Bunde Cooma carried the said trading man, with his three slaves, to the said Robert Johnston, all of which he purchased to the entire satisfaction of said trader ; that when Mr. Charles Bell, chief of the fort at Winnebah, heard of Bunde Cooma's carrying those three slaves to Mr. Johnston, he, the said Charles Bell, (contrary to act of parliament, and all laws and regulations established by the committee of the company of merchants trading to Africa) did make a palaver upon the said Bunde Cooma, by brandying him two days successively to the soldiers of the town, in order to make him spend a great deal of money ; and that the said soldiers of the town, at the instigation of the said Charles Bell, did kill several sheep belonging to the inhabitants, all of which the said Bunde Cooma was obliged to pay for, besides giving a large quantity of liquor to the said soldiers, in order to pacify them ; and he, this deponent, farther sayeth, that the only reason, he, the said Charles Bell, had for distressing the said Bunde Cooma in the manner before-mentioned was, because he, the said Bunde Cooma, carried the aforementioned three slaves to the said Robert Johnston in preference to himself, and to deter him and all others of the inhabitants from doing the like in future ; and this deponent farther sayeth, that after he, the said Charles Bell, had made the said Bunde Cooma spend as much as he could, and distressed him as much as was in his power, he, the said Charles Bell, ordered all the inhabitants of the town to assemble in the public market-place, and after they were all assembled, he, the said Charles Bell, sent them a considerable quantity of liquor out of the fort ; and at the same time gave his orders, that in future, every slave brought into town should be first carried to him into the fort, as they should answer it at their perils.

The following is a copy of a second letter I received from Mr. Robert Johnston, Merchant, dated Winnebah, June 17th, 1770.

S I R,

WHEN Mr. Thomas Drew came down as chief of Winnebah in October last, the house custom on each slave was only one acky, and he immediately raised it to two ackies, which has ever since continued ; this is a hardship. Mr. Drew has also introduced another custom ; that
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is, after purchasing a slave, and paying for him, he pays every trader on each slave he buys two ackies over the price of the slave : this obliges me to do the same, and that is a very great hardship upon me ; this is a fact, as I have seen several of his notes to different traders to this effect.

There are many other customs introduced by the said gentleman, particularly when he hears of any of the traders coming into town with slaves, sending them beef or pork and rum, they expecting the same from me ; besides all these extravagant customs, he gives the trading man a cloth for every two or three slaves he sells him.

I have still another grievance to urge against Mr. Drew ; from my first settling at Winnebah I entertained in my service one Quassafoe, a man very intelligent, and one who speaks English well, but Mr. Drew never let the fellow rest till he inveigled him from my service, which he accomplished last February, with great promises of making him Company's linguist ; and the very day he left me, he gave him a fine striped taffaty cloth. And through this fellow's means they have seduced many traders from me ; is not this a hardship ? I wrote to Mr. Drew upon all these heads, some of which he denied, and to others he gave me evasive answers ; this is all that I can recollect at present regarding that gentleman.

The following is a copy of a letter I received from our factor at Mumford, dated August 5th, 1769.

S I R,

SINCE my last to you I have disposed of the tobacco, only the two rolls I have been obliged to sell at a discount, owing to its drying on hand, which is quite another case with Mr. Grossle's factory ; for his agent informs me all the bad tobacco, and other goods that will not pass in trade, are sent to Cape Coast, and issued out to the Company's servants ; so that he must have greaty the advantage of other factories. I myself have seen tobacco sent up in canoes to Cape Coast at different times which was unfit for sale, and am ready to take my deposition to the above ; his factor at Mumford gave me the information. I have only to add that I am with respect, S I R,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

THOMAS MILLER.

The following are the prices Mr. Williams, chief of Appolonia, wants goods at, and will not exceed, by which you will see the advantages private traders reap from our having built a fort there.

	<i>Ackies</i>	<i>Sterling.</i>
Green and yellow ells at	10 each equal to - -	£. 2 7 4
Danes guns - - -	3 - ditto - - -	0 14 2
Half barrels powder - -	9 - ditto - - -	2 2 6
Quarter barrels ditto - -	4½ - ditto - - -	1 1 3
Bejutapauts and negannepauts	5 - ditto - - -	1 3 6
Seftracundees - - -	5 - ditto - - -	1 3 6
Patna chints - - -	4 - ditto - - -	0 19 0
Pullicats - - -	10 - ditto - - -	2 7 4
Mixt patches - - -	3½ - ditto - - -	0 16 7
Guinea Stuffs - - -	1 - ditto - - -	0 4 6
Blue Bafts - - -	4½ - ditto - - -	1 1 4
		£. 14 1 0

Prime cost of a piece of each of the foregoing goods.

1 Green ell - - -	£. 1 15 0	
1 Danes gun - - -	0 13 6	
1 Half barrel powder - -	1 10 0	
1 Quarter barrel ditto - -	0 15 0	
1 Bejutapaut or negannepaut	0 19 0	if Manchester £. 1 4 0
1 Seftracundee - - -	1 4 0	
1 Patna Chints - - -	0 16 0	
1 Pullicat - - -	3 12 0	
1 Mixed patch - - -	0 16 0	
1 Guinea stuff - - -	0 4 6	
1 Blue baft - - -	1 1 0	
		£. 13 6 0
Add to this 7½ per cent. insurance	0 19 6	
		£. 14 5 6

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By the foregoing calculation it appears that if interest of money, freight, commissions, shipping, and all other charges, were particularized, we should lose from 10 to 20 per cent. by our Cape Appolonia trade; it is not however so with the governor, who is not saddled with any one charge or expence whatsoever, and for whose sole emolument it will appear this fort is to be supported.

GENTLEMEN,

Annamaboe, October 15th, 1770.

SINCE my last dated the 1st of July, I have informed myself of several other abuses, committed by the committee and their servants here, which I beg leave to transmit you by this opportunity, and sincerely hope they will arrive safe, and in time to be of service, when the regulations you propose making in our system here come under consideration.

Upon Mr. Grosse's death, August the 13th, Mr. Mill succeeded to the government of Cape Coast, and at that time had a prodigious quantity of goods at Accra, the greatest part of which his successor, Mr. Drew, has agreed to pay him slaves for, so that that fort and its dependencies are neither more nor less than factories to Mr. Mill, until his stock there is realized, and we are to suppose the chief is not at liberty till then to dispose of a slave to the shipping.

The forts of Appolonia, Dixcove, Succondee, and Commenda, are to all intents and purposes factories for the governors of Cape Coast and Annamaboe, who keep them constantly supplied with goods, so that the private trader has no chance of getting any quantity of gold from these places; and as those gentlemen are complimented by the merchants of London and Bristol with the freight of their goods out, in expectation of participating of their favours in trade, they can greatly undersell the private and fair trader, who is obliged to outfit ships at a great expence.

September the 8th, a brig called the Beggar's Benison, loaded with rum, and commanded by David Dunn from Boston, arrived at Cape Coast; upon Captain Dunn's coming down here, he informed me that Mr. Grosse owned the one-third of his vessel and cargoe, which he said he would not have mentioned had he (Grosse) been alive, and from the assistance he received from certain gentlemen in London by their sending him

him letters of credit to Boston, although a perfect stranger to them, we have all the reason imaginable to think another gentleman or gentlemen, in high stations now on the Coast, are connected also with him. Captain Dunn has disposed of his rum immediately amongst the governor and his dependents, and has had a cargoe of prime assorted dry goods put on board his vessel at Cape Coast, on a pretence of bartering them with him for rum, and the vessel dispatched down to Mumford to purchase slaves, where Captain Dunn has taken possession of the factory which Mr. Grosse occupied there, and has purchased a great many slaves in opposition to the ship's long boats, and the factories established by private traders at that place; but as there is no possibility of getting a sight of the bill of sale of Captain Dunn's vessel, or otherwise proving these conjectures, I cannot take upon me to assert them as facts.

Messrs. Mill and Bell, governors of Cape Coast and Annamaboe, have jointly, within these few days past, purchased a Rhode Island vessel's cargoe, upon condition that the Captain should credit them five months, and give them the use of the vessel during that time to trade jointly for them, wherever they please to send her, and they are now unloading her, and propose to send her directly on a trading voyage; query, is this, or is it not flying in the face of the committee and their constituents? and telling them that they will have factories afloat since they are prohibited from having them on shore; and that they are determined to oppose and rival the private trader when and wherever they can?

Mr. Drew, Chief of Accra, has also bought two sloops, which are to supply the places of two factories which he was obliged to evacuate.

There is scarce a vessel comes on the Coast either from London or Bristol, but what brings out goods for Mr. Mill and Mr. Bell. Captain Hamilton, in the Jamaica, told us he brought Mr. Mill out 30 tons of goods in that ship; Captain Harriot, in the St. Helena, brought out a large quantity for him; Captain Goodwin, of London, brought out a considerable quantity; Captain Marshall, of Bristol, brought out Mr. Bell one hundred romauls, and Captain Gullen, of Bristol, has now on board a quantity of goods for them. How, in the name of God, is it possible for this trade to be ever upon a proper footing, when one of the committee, Mr. Gilbert Ross,

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is the very man, who in conjunction with Mr. Mill's brother sends out the greatest part of these goods, and is no doubt concerned, or has a proper feeling?

The Liverpool people, much to their honour, have to a man refused to let any goods belonging to these gentlemen come out in their ships, although applied to by one Woodall formerly a master of a ship there, and when he found there was no possibility of getting the goods out in any other manner, he bought a Bermudas sloop, and sent her out here, with a large quantity of goods for Mr. Mill, Mr. Grosse, and Mr. Bell, and, in three months after the goods were landed, she was sent off from Accra by Mr. Mill with ninety slaves to Pensacola.

When Captain Howe of the *Masguin* of Bristol, and Captain Gullen of the *Roebuck* from the same port, anchored at Appolonia, the beginning of this month, several traders came off to them, but upon their seeing Mr. Miles the chief going on board the *Roebuck*, the traders intreated Captain How to hide them in his hold or between decks, which he was obliged to do, as they told him they were afraid of being seen by Mr. Miles trading on board ships, and when Captain Howe proposed trading with Mr. Miles, he answered that all the gold he took was for Mr. Mill, as he was supplied with goods by him, so that Captain Howe assured me, he did not take 5 ounces of gold at Cape Appolonia this voyage, and when he touched there in his way down the last voyage, he bought upwards of 100 ounces of gold in 4 days at that place, *the chief being at that time at Cape Coast*. This relation I had from Captain Howe, who is ready to attest it, and who declared the same at Cape Coast Table to Mr. Mill, and appealed to Captain Gullen who was present for the truth of his assertion.

I am informed by Captain Bold of the ship *John* of Liverpool, that on or about the first of September he made a proposal to Mr. Green chief of Tantomquerry, to purchase some slaves from him, and had offered him the same price he had paid others, viz. 10 ounces, 6 pennyweight for men, and 8 ounces, 6 pennyweight for women; and that the said Green gave him for answer in writing, and also told his officer, that he could get a better price from the gentlemen in the forts, and that unless he paid
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eleven ounces for men, and nine ounces for women, he would not trade with him, notwithstanding I had sold captain Bold one hundred slaves at the above price, as did Mr. Johnson, a private trader at Winnebah, and several others.

To such a pitch of insolence are the natives of this part of the Coast now arrived (from the ruinous and contemptible state of the forts, and the pusillanimity of the wretches who in general govern them) that it is hardly possible to live upon any tolerable terms with them; some months ago, the people, living under the protection of our principal settlement at Cape Coast, caught Mr. Williamson, surgeon of the castle, in the garden, carried him into the Bush or Country, stripped him naked, and whipped him in a terrible manner, for which insult he was gratified with a slave, which Mr. Grosble, the then governor, obliged the Caboceer of Cape Coast to pay him.

In a little time after, the natives of the English town at Commenda caught Mr. Green (a boy put in as chief of the fort by Mr. Petrie, and who had been guilty of oppressing and maltreating the inhabitants) stripped him, and flogged him in a most shocking manner, afterwards tied him under the walls of the fort, put him into a three hand canoe, and carried him down to Elmina the principal settlement of the Dutch, there threw him upon the rocks and left him; after which by the assistance of an English man of war, he was carried back to his fort, and demanded a pecuniary satisfaction for the ill treatment he had received, but the town's people refusing to comply with his demands, he immediately fired the town, upon which the inhabitants quitted it, some of whom are gone over to the Dutch, under whose protection they now live, and others into the country, so that we have lost a fine flourishing town (consisting of about 500 inhabitants, who absolutely saved the English fort in the year 1758, when it was attacked by the Dutch,) by the indiscretion and rapacity of *master* Green, who instead of being ignominiously discharged the service, which he should have been, is now preferred to the command of Tatumquerry fort.

About six weeks ago as Mr. Drew (who is now member of the council and governor of Accra) was in his way from Winnibah to Cape Coast (being
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sent for on public business) he was panyared or caught by the people of Agah, an English town situated between Annamaboe and Cormantyne, and by them confined in Cormantyne fort, belonging to the Dutch, upon pretence that he had killed a Caboceer's son, who was his servant; and notwithstanding he proved in the fullest manner that the boy died by an accident (having stepped upon a piece of glass, by which he cut an artery and bled to death) they would not enlarge him till he paid them five slaves, equal to 100l. sterling; and after he went to Cape Coast, they made a second demand upon him, which prevented his coming on shore here in his way down, fearing he should fall a second time into their hands, being well acquainted with the pusillanimity of the poor creature who governs this fort, and who he knew would suffer him to be carried off from under the walls, or any other indignity, rather than endanger the loss of his trade, by having any dispute with the natives; indeed he has often declared publicly, he would not upon any account whatsoever fall out with them: thus the national honour is sacrificed to private interest, by giving up every point to the natives, be it ever so disgraceful or injurious.

The numberless affronts and disgraces which the chiefs, and others in the committee's service, daily receive from the natives; their pusillanimous behaviour on these occasions; the ruinous state and condition of the forts, destitute of people and every thing else for their defence, is sufficient to deter any man from settling in this country, where he has no protection or assistance to expect from the forts, and where he must lay his account in encountering every species of opposition, envy, and ill-will from the committee and their servants.

I must not omit informing you that it is reported here, and I believe with good foundation, that a strong mercantile connection is now forming, or is already formed by Messrs. Ross and Mill of London, Mr. Petrie late governor of Cape Coast, and Mr. Mill the present governor; that Petrie proposes coming out if he can as governor a second time, and to have the management of the trade, and if he cannot succeed with the committee, Mr. Mill is to have the direction of their affairs on the Coast; that Petrie in that case is to endeavour to get into the committee, in order to back

Mr. Rofs upon all occasions, and that it is already fixed that the year Mr. Rofs is out of the committee, his place is to be filled up by his partner Mr. Mill.

The above report calls to my mind a piece of advice which was given me in July 1769, by the late Captain John Stephens, of the *Africa*, (a great friend and confident of the aforementioned gentlemen) which was immediately to declare myself a bankrupt, and deliver up our settlement here, and the effects to Mr. Smith; that he was authorized by a considerable house in London, to assure me if I did so, I should be backed with 40,000 sterling; that they would purchase the settlement here, and fix me in it upon my own terms.

When this advice was given me, I treated it (as every honest man should) with contempt, at the same time thought it proceeded from his friendship for me, imagining from his ignorance of our affairs he thought them desperate; but it is now very clear that his and their sole view was to possess themselves of this house, where with their great interest in the committee, and connections with the gentlemen in the service, they would, in a very little time, engross the whole of the Gold Coast trade, and if a monopoly of this trade was not intended, what could induce Mr. Petrie to come out a second time, when he carried off about eighteen months ago, a fortune of 14 or 15,000*l*. how it was acquired I have before informed you.

It may perhaps be a matter of surprise to the merchants at home, that I should be the only person such a number of complaints come from; you will please therefore to observe that I am the only private settler on this Coast, except Mr. Johnston at Winnebah, and he has as great a variety of complaints to prefer against Messrs. Bell and Drew, the late chiefs of that fort, upon the arrival of the first man of war; and if there were ever so many private traders (though they might experience every kind of oppression from the committee and their servants) yet it would be impossible for them to point out a remedy, on account of their distance from the principal government, and their want of proper information and experience; captains of ships might certainly inform you of many abuses, did not their fear of making enemies of these gentlemen prevent them;

them; if they disoblige one, they disoblige all; therefore in order to make a quick purchase, every thing the merchants can do in England, or the captains on the Coast, to ingratiate themselves into their favour is done; besides it is impossible for masters of ships to come to a knowledge of many abuses, committed by the committee's servants; these are secrets to all but those who have served the committee, and as I am the only man in Africa out of the service, that can possibly have any knowledge of these affairs, I am also the only man can give you information.

I am this moment informed by Captain Ritchie of the Dispatch of Liverpool, that sometime after his arrival in Annamaboe Road this voyage, he sent his mate in his long boat to trade at Appolonia for gold; that as soon as the mate went on shore, Mr. Miles, the present chief, sent his servant into town with his scales and weights, and to tell the inhabitants that he would sell all his goods as low as the mate, and give them besides a gallon of rum in a present upon every ounce of gold they brought him; that the next day the mate saw him take forty ounces of gold, and that all the time he continued at Appolonia, he did not take five ounces of gold.

Captain Ritchie tells me, he proposes to get his mate to take his affidavit to the above circumstance, when he arrives in the West Indies.

Before this reaches you, a brother of Mr. Mill's will be sailed from England for this Coast; whether he brings out the Ruby of four or five hundred tons, in which he sailed from here last March full of slaves, or another ship I cannot tell, but he is certainly to be out here shortly with a large quantity of goods, and to carry off a cargoe of slaves. I cannot positively say, if his brother here is concerned with him, but it is more than probable he is; at any rate he can ship as many slaves as he pleases on freight without fear of discovery.

I am amazed that the African merchants should entertain the smallest doubt of these gentlemen's shipping off constantly great numbers of slaves; if they did not, how is their credit to be supported in England? and the great cargoes of goods which are frequently sent them to be paid for? as it is notorious ivory sufficient is not to be procured on this part of the Coast, and gold is the worst remittance they can possibly make.

This moment poor Mr. Johnston, who is now here, has had an express from Winnebah, giving him the melancholy account of his house being destroyed by fire; what his loss is, cannot be ascertained till he gets down, but apprehend it must be very considerable, notwithstanding his house was within forty yards of the castle; this proves what I have all along been informing you of, *viz.* the inattention of the committee to the welfare of private traders, in not allowing them liberty to lodge their effects in the forts in common with their servants; their diabolical partiality in this respect deserves the severest censure, and cannot fail to rouse the indignation of every good and honest man; but what can be expected from a set of blunderers, who can have never had any other views in getting into the committee, but to advance their own private interest, either by supplying the Coast with the manufactures they deal in, or by distressing the private traders to ingratiate themselves into the favour of their servants on the Coast, in order to procure their consignments; figure to yourselves, gentlemen, the deplorable situation of a poor man, who has used this Coast between fifteen and twenty years, and just as he had acquired sufficient to carry on an extensive trade, is in a few hours reduced perhaps to a state of beggary, whilst the servants of the committee are rioting in every indulgence the forts can afford, and whose very slaves are accommodated with conveniences which are denied to the private traders.

Give me leave to ask you once more, gentlemen, for what purposes are these forts supported? they surely are not kept up barely as marks of possession, or for the emolument of the committee and their servants? I have read all the acts of parliament relating to this Coast, and must confess that they have amply provided for the security of the private trader, and all his effects whatsoever, but sorry I am to say, and to have experienced, that acts of the British legislature are no more regarded in this country, than they are in Japan. You may possibly imagine, gentlemen, that in cases of fire, or any other accidents happening to private traders, they will be the only sufferers; but in this you are certainly mistaken; there is scarce a captain arrives here, but from the dullness of trade, or an ill assorted cargo, he is under the necessity of trusting these gentlemen

a very considerable part of your property; therefore you undoubtedly run as great risques as the private trader in the cases aforementioned, as they have frequently more of your property in their hands, than their own capitals amount to.

The goods left by Mr. Mill at Accra, and which Mr. Drew is to pay him slaves for, amount to three thousand ounces, equal to three hundred men slaves.

I am just informed of a Rhode Island vessel getting under sail for Barbadoes, which obliges me to break off so abruptly, have therefore only to assure you, that I am with the greatest esteem,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD BREW.

When any alterations happen in the trade here, you may depend upon the earliest intelligence. Capt. Marshall and all on board the Marlborough are well, and make no doubt will do well.

GENTLEMEN,

Castle Brew, April 10th, 1771.

I Had the pleasure to receive a letter from Mr. Barber by the Corsican Hero, with a copy of your letter to the African committee at London, dated January the 25th, inclosed, by which I find you are resolutely bent on procuring redress of the many grievances set forth in the different letters I wrote Mr. Barber on African affairs, which will be a great inducement to me to continue to advise you regularly of all occurrences on the Coast, which may tend in any shape to the advantage of trade and free traders, and expose the mal-practices of the committee's servants whenever they come under my observation; at the same time, I cannot help observing to you, gentlemen, that from my knowledge of the people in power here, the method they have all along and still continue to pursue, their great connections with several of the committee, contrary to the act of parliament, the length of time requisite to prefer complaints, and give them an opportunity to defend themselves, with the uncertain issue of these complaints, together with the prodigious way they are in of speedily making their fortunes: from these circumstances, I say, I am thoroughly convinced,

convinced, the desired end will never be obtained till the committee's servants are totally prohibited from all manner of trade whatsoever: what further security have you now more than formerly that these gentlemen will conform to any new laws or regulations which the committee may send out? none; and it is as true as the gospel they will pay no more regard to them than they ever did, if they tend to lay the least restraint whatsoever on their trade. If you discourse with any of the committee's servants about these affairs on the Coast, they have the impudence to tell you, that before complaints can be exhibited, their story heard, and the affair brought to an issue, two or three years will elapse, besides being allowed six months time to realize their effects, in case the affair should be given against them; in all which time they will have done their business, or in other words will have made their fortunes, and the committee may dismiss them their service afterwards as soon as they please; therefore, to root out the evil effectually, you have no remedy left, but to alter the establishment or prohibit the committee's servants from all trade whatsoever, and oblige them to give ample security in England for a punctual performance of all orders and regulations, which shall from time to time be sent out by the committee.

Some time in December last, the fishermen of this town committed a most horrid murder under the walls of Annamaboe fort, by cutting to pieces a man belonging to the Fantee town in cold blood; the custom of the country in such cases is, that the chief of the fort immediately demands the murderers, and either delivers them up to be dealt with according to the laws of the country, or hangs them over one of the guns of his fort. By desire of the natives, the chief of our fort here, Mr. Bell, (when this affair happened) was several times pressed by the Fantee people to demand these murderers, but they never could prevail upon him to do it; by which conduct, he has not only given up one of his most valuable privileges, that of acting as principal mediator in all disputes with the natives, but it has occasioned the Fantees to make war on the fishermen, by which upwards of twenty men have lost their lives on both sides, besides putting a stop to all manner of trade, except what goes from Cormantyne and Agah. Vegetables and provisions of all kinds are stopped from

from going off to the shipping, as well as wood, water, and every other necessary, which they used to have in great abundance from this town; by which means they have suffered severely, especially those who have had any number of slaves on board; this palaver commenced now almost four months ago, and there is no prospect of its being settled except the chief interposes his authority, of which there is not the smallest likelihood, as he has been often heard to declare, he never would interfere directly or indirectly with their palaver.

Until within these few days past, Mr. Bell kept the back gate of his fort constantly open in the day time to preserve a communication between him and the fishermen, from whom he used to get a good deal of trade; and this I take to have been the reason for his not demanding the murderers or getting the palaver settled, lest by acting vigorously against them, his trade might suffer from that quarter.

The Fantees, however, soon put a stop to his trade by blocking up his avenues to his principal gate, and for six or seven days suffered neither provisions nor slaves to go into the fort; upon which he gave them two anchors of rum, and a promise to use his best endeavours to get the palaver settled, provided they would not molest the traders and others going to the fort in future; thus the affair rests, and thus the shipping and private traders suffer for the folly and indiscretion (to give them no worse epithets) of those who are too well paid for protecting, aiding, and assisting them.

I leave you to judge, gentlemen, what sixteen or eighteen sail of vessels, which we have now here, must suffer from this man's conduct; and the misfortune is, we don't know when, or where, this affair will end, or where to apply for redress: the captains remonstrated to the governor and council of Cape Coast upon the affair of the factories, and were treated with the utmost contempt, they not vouchsafing even to give them an answer; therefore, to apply to them would answer no purpose, except to render them, if possible, more insolent. Out of numberless instances of the extreme insolence and wantonness of our chief here, and his natural propensity to give offence, I shall only select one, which happened the 8th instant: as his majesty's ship the Rainbow was standing
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into the road of Cape Coast, which is in sight of this fort, Mr. Bell hoisted his colours, which was an union flag, very old, shabby, but not to be discerned at that distance; in a few hours after, the Corsican Hero of Liverpool, Captain Smith, was seen standing into this road, and as soon as she was right a-breast of this fort, Mr. Bell hauled down his English colours, and hoisted a Scotch jack, that is, a blue field with a white St. Andrew's cross; knowing, I suppose, that this was one of the two ships, whose owners refused to let Mr. Woodal ship goods in last year for him and Messrs. Grosle and Mill.

About a month ago, the Peggy, Captain Hercules Mill, a large ship from London, arrived at Cape Appolonia, where letters were lodged for him, and he there delivered the chief, Mr. Miles, who is factor for Governor Mill (and for whose sole emolument that fort is now supported) a large quantity of goods; after which he run down to Cape Coast, landed Mr. Mill more goods, and then came down here, where he has landed Mr. Bell a very large quantity; I was a witness myself to six or seven butts of cloth goods, and a great many other very large cases and packages. Captain Mill lies now with his ship trading in this road.

You see, gentlemen, what a prospect you have of making voyages to the Gold Coast, and with what reason you expect an amendment in this trade, when one of the members of the committee is the very man who sends out all these goods to oppose you; and for which good services, you may depend his ships and connections will always be preferred to all others.

In January last, the Mary James store ship, Captain Darling, arrived at Cape Coast; he brought out goods to dispose of on the Coast to the amount of sixty or seventy slaves, and as his stay was to be very short, he made an offer of them to any of the gentlemen who would engage to furnish him with slaves at eleven ounces men, and nine ounces women. Almost all the gentlemen he applied to, had so many engagements on their hands at that time, that they either could not, or would not, accept his proposals; so that he had no alternative, but to raise the price of slaves to the natives, or carry his goods round to the West Indies and Europe; he accordingly raised the price to ten and ten and half ounces for men, and eight and eight and half for women; some do not scruple to say he gave eleven

for men, and nine for women; and this conduct (though it is hard to blame Captain Darling) has been of infinite prejudice to the trade, as the traders expected for some time that the shipping at Annamaboe would continue to give the same price; and upon refusal, numbers of them grew extremely insolent; the price, however, got up to ten ounces for men, and eight for women, by the going ships, but I am much afraid it will soon become general. Messrs. Mill and Bell, however, could find slaves to sell Captain Darling for bills of exchange; as Captain Darling assured me he had twenty from Bell, and was to have between twenty and thirty from Mr. Mill; and that the former of those two gentlemen gave him the strongest assurances of selling him sixty for bills this year, and Mr. Mill one hundred; and that these two gentlemen had farther engaged to give him two hundred slaves on freight for account of Mr. Grosle's estate, over and above the one hundred and sixty beforementioned to be sold for bills. Captain Darling was upon the Coast but five or six weeks, and carried off one hundred and sixty slaves; so that the difference must have been either sold for bills also, or shipped on freight, which last I am most inclined to conjecture; for I never can be brought to think that Mr. Mill, Mr. Bell, or any other gentlemen in the service, are so simple as to sell a prime Gold Coast man slave (as no other would be accepted) for a bill of 20l. when there is a moral certainty, that such a slave would fetch 36l. sterling in the West-Indies; allowing then a man slave to fetch in the West-Indies 36l.

From which deduct 10 per cent. commission	£. 3	12	0	
Freight 5l. mortality 1l. 16s.	-	-	6	16 0
Doctor's head money	-	-	0	1 0
London bill	-	-	20	0 0
			<u>30</u>	<u>9 0</u>

There remains and appears to be a loss on every man slave of 5 11 0 and as women are said to be sold for only 16l. in bills, and differ only 40s. from the price of men in the West-Indies, it will appear that those gentlemen will lose 7l. 11s. sterling on every woman; to this it will be objected, that they are prohibited by the committee-instructions from shipping slaves on freight, and have no alternative but to sell them either

for goods or bills; which last method, they tell you, they are obliged to take, in order to support their credit and pay for the goods sent them out by their friends; what credit you are pleased to give them, gentlemen, I cannot pretend to say; but for my part, I do not believe a syllable of it; neither do I believe any merchant in England would send a ship of five or four, or even three hundred tons, with the supplies every year to Cape Coast for the paltry consideration of 500*l*. if they had not strong assurances of a good freight of slaves from the Coast to the West-Indies.

The Jamaica store ship, of five or six hundred tons burthen, chiefly owned by the late Mr. Biscoe, committee-man for Bristol, was sent out last year with the supplies, upon a presumption that his good friend Mr. Grosse was living, and at the head of affairs, and would secure a good freight for her; several letters were wrote the chiefs on the Coast at that time, and large quantities of goods sent out freight free, for what purpose it is easy to imagine; now if the members of the committee, who ought to be the guardians of this trade, will dare to out-fit ships, supply all their servants with goods on the Coast, receive all their remittances, and encourage them not only to break through their own instructions and regulations, but even acts of parliament, I think it is almost time to bid adieu to this trade.

The gentlemen in the fort, I believe, apprehend they will be forbid to keep craft; to remedy which, they have fallen upon a method of taking some part of the ship's cargoes, in order to have the use of these vessels and the craft belonging to them; an instance or two I gave Mr. Barber in my letter to him of 20th July, wherein Messrs. Mill and Bell, took a Rhode Island brig's cargo, on condition of having the use of the vessel for five months to trade for them on the Coast, and the brig Beggar's Bannison, Captain Dunn, who was kept trading to leeward six months for them, and afterwards dispatched from Cape Coast to the West-Indies full of slaves.

Mr. Trinder also took part of a Boston schooner's cargo in February last, on condition that the Captain should run down to Whydah and land it there for him, which he did; so that let the committee send what orders they will, these people will find methods to elude them.

Captain

Captain George Young, of his Majesty's sloop Weazle, being just gone on board in order to sail, I am obliged to conclude with assuring you, I shall embrace every opportunity to advise you how matters are carried on, on the Coast, and that I am with great esteem,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient servant,

RICHARD BREW,

GENTLEMEN,

Castle Brew, August 25, 1771.

BY the Corfican Hero, late Captain Smith, Miles Barber, Esq; did me the honour to transmit me a copy of the African committee's letter to him, dated the 25th of last February, by which I find they have taken great offence at my detecting and exposing their unwarrantable proceedings, and the mal-practices of their servants on the Coast; a circumstance, however, I am perfectly easy about.

Before I proceed to inform you of some late transactions on the Coast, I beg leave to say something in my own behalf, as the committee have stated matters to you in a very ungenteel, unfair manner.

The first thing the committee takes notice of in their letter to Mr. Barber is, "that it would be contrary to all rules of law and justice to have admitted my evidence against them and their servants.

In answer to which give me leave to ask you, gentlemen, whether my evidence and oath in a court of justice, or at the bar of the House of Commons, would not be looked upon as valid as the evidence of any member of the committee, or the oaths of any master or mate of a ship whatsoever.

In the year 1753, one of this righteous committee suspended me from the government of Tantomquerry fort, upon the bare evidence of Mr. David Hamilton of Bristol, who was then only a mate of a ship. I was condemned even without the form of a trial, which shews that what was law and justice in those days is not so now.

In the year 1764, another committee suspended me from the government of Annamaboe, upon the evidence of one Easton, a master of a vessel belonging to Liverpool: the charge was, that I had shipped off five

hundred and twelve slaves for my own account in the ship Duke of Marlborough, of London, in the year 1761; and notwithstanding the complaint was not lodged till the year 1764, and that those slaves were shipped off long before the act of parliament (prohibiting the servants of the committee to ship slaves on their own accounts) had passed, or any such orders being sent out by the committee; yet they thought proper, without even the colour of law, justice or equity, to suspend me from my government, and to appoint my successor by the same letters that brought out my suspension; yet these gentlemen have the assurance to talk of the lenity they had shewn me, and insinuate that if I had applied to them for redress I should have had it.

Please to observe, gentlemen, that the committee say they only suspended me, but as it takes two or three years before matters of this kind can be properly cleared up, and the issue (even though they had admitted me to a fair trial) doubtful, that suspension was tantamount to a discharge from their service, for it cannot be supposed that any man would throw so much of his time away without a moral certainty of being reinstated; and from my own experience, and knowledge of the envy and ill-will of several members of the committee, I could expect no justice from them.

In the year 1767, when Mr. Grosse burned the town of Annamaboe, and killed three or four of the town's people, I wrote the committee the whole affair; I even sent them a diary of the transactions here during that palaver, but as I therein reflected on the conduct of their governor, they never thought proper to take the smallest notice whatsoever of my letter; upon which I resolved never more to trouble them; besides as I had no complaints to make but what affected the publick, and in which they were comprehended with their servants, I could not with any propriety make application to them.

Notwithstanding my *voluminous production* (as the committee are wittily pleased to call it, consisting of no less than sixty paragraphs) contained many accusations against them and their servants, they chose to pass them over, and rest the whole upon proofs being made of the governor's shipping off slaves on their own accounts.

In one of my former letters to Mr. Barber, I mentioned what the committee, nor any of their servants will dare to deny, and what is perfectly well known to every master of a ship, and settler on this Coast, *viz.* that every servant of the committee, who has made any money on the Coast since the commencement of this system, has realized and shipped off the whole of their effects in slaves, and that it is of no signification to the British merchants, whether those slaves are shipped off in June or January, this year or the next, so as they are permitted to ship them off at all; but it seems, if you cannot ascertain the particular time these slaves are sent off, you prove nothing.

The greatest part of the slaves sent off this Coast in a clandestine manner for these five years past, have been sent by the Africa, late Capt. Stephens, in the three voyages he made here. Capt. Stephens kept a book which contained all his transactions on the Coast, and at the same time served as a log book; this book he called his church bible; and as I am certain every slave he carried off on freight, and the shippers names are to be found in this book, I would humbly propose when African affairs are brought before the House of Commons, that Mr. Michael Herries (procurator for Richard Oswald, Esq;) be summoned to the bar of the House, and ordered to produce this book, which if he does I am pretty confident all your doubts will be cleared up; and if it is not forthcoming, depend upon it it has been destroyed to prevent a discovery; but as I said before, what does it signify to you if a governor who is worth five hundred slaves ship fifty or one hundred every year, or if the whole are sent off at once?

The trade for many months past has been so very bad, and the opposition from Cape Coast Castle and Annamaboe Fort has been so great, that the shipping and private traders have suffered inconceivably; the ship Ingram, Capt. James Paisley, has been here now seven months, and has not purchased half her cargoe of slaves, though her complement is but three hundred and twenty; the Corsican Hero, late Smith, has been here upwards of four months, and has not purchased sixty slaves; the Africa, Capt. Smith of Bristol, has been here four months, and has not purchased twenty; and the Greenwich, Capt. Harwood of Bristol, has been here upwards of three months, and has not purchased one slave from
the

the natives; Capt. Brown, of the Kitty, of Liverpool, and Capt. Fleetwood, of the Swallow, from same port, have been each nine months at Annamaboe, the one for three hundred and thirty five, the other for two hundred and fifty slaves; indeed the trade is now so totally ruined, that we have been obliged to barter away two Gold Coast cargoes, amounting to eight hundred and fifty slaves, for Leeward goods, and to send the ships Albany and Pembroke down there, as we saw no prospect of getting them flaved off in any reasonable time at this place; yet the Peggy, Capt. Mill, was here and at Cape Coast no longer than four months, and carried off from between three hundred and fifty to four hundred slaves; and the Richmond, Capt. Rogers of London, a ship of three hundred tons, chartered and sent out by Mess. Ross and Mill, has been at Cape Coast little more than three months, and sails this day with four hundred slaves; this ship was sent out here with a cargoe of goods for Mess. Mill and Bell, another cargoe for the general of Elmina, a fourth for the fiscal of Elmina, a fifth for the chiefs of Cormantyne, and a sixth for the Dutch chief at Accra.

Our opposition from the Dutch for some years past has been very great; their home manufactures, if not quite so good, are infinitely cheaper, and go off to the full as well as ours, and their slaves sell higher by twenty-five or thirty *per cent.* in their colonies than ours; from these advantages they are enabled to over-bid us on the Coast, and if they once get into the method of being supplied with English goods to mix with their own, we shall be assuredly cut out of this trade in a very little time; for it is well known that a mixture of Dutch and English goods is preferable on the Gold Coast to either English or Dutch singly; it will therefore be highly necessary to put a timely stop to these practices; at least members of the committee should be restrained from having any concern directly or indirectly in them.

I have seen Mr. Camplin's *vera copia* of the committee's minutes and instructions to their governor and council here; what impression they have left on the minds of the Liverpool gentlemen I cannot pretend to say, but am of opinion they were not at all satisfactory.

The

The council at Cape Coast is composed of Mr. Mill, governor; Mr. Bell, chief of Annamaboe; Mr. Trinder, chief of Winnebah; and Mr. Drew, chief of Accra, all of whom I have accused of mal-practices, the three last in particular, *and the committee, out of their profound respect for their constituents, have condescended to write out to these very gentlemen, to institute an enquiry into the charges exhibited against themselves, even though the charge is brought only by Mr. Brew.* What the result of this enquiry will be does not require a Daniel to foretell; it is however astonishing that the committee would dare offer such a bare-faced affront to your understandings, as to imagine you would be duped by such a shallow device, and such flimsy assurances of redress; instead of giving you the satisfaction you are so justly entitled to, their letter is filled with impertinent insinuations, which reflect no credit either on them or their servants, whose cause they so shamefully endeavour to support.

From the reception the Liverpool gentlemen's letter met with from the committee; their standing forth the champions of their servants upon all occasions; the rancorous treatment I have met with from them, for exposing the mal-practices of their governors, and their own unjustifiable conduct, I am firmly persuaded they never mean to alter the present mode on the Coast; your only relief then must be from parliament, and a total abolition of their board; and it should be attempted as soon as possible, for when the committee's servants find they have nothing to fear from all these representations; that they are aided, assisted, and so strenuously supported by the committee, and that all complaints whatsoever against them are discouraged and disregarded, there is no knowing how far their boundless insolence will carry them; indeed I am certain if this contest does not produce regulations favourable to the private trader, and effectually restrain and keep the committee's servants within proper bounds, you had best give up the trade at once.—I have not at present to add, but that you may depend I will continue to advise you regularly of all occurrences worth your notice, and that I am, with the greatest respect,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD BREW.

DEAR SIR,

Castle Brew, August 25, 1771.

INCLOSED I send you a letter for your committee, in which you will observe I have made mention of Capt. Stephens's church bible, and could have added a good deal more on that subject in my publick letter, but was cautious of appearing to have any particular design against Mr. Mill; however, as I am entered so far on this affair, it behoves me to persevere, and am determined to make you, and your committee acquainted with every thing material that falls under my observation; the following circumstance however I chuse to make you *only* acquainted with, as it will enable you to make the proper enquiries when these matters are brought before the house.

About seven months ago a gentleman, who is now a chief of one of the forts, acquainted me, that he was told by Mr. Alleyn, Captain Stephens's clerk, and who is now a writer in the service, that when the ship *Africa* went down to Accra, last voyage, after burying Capt. Stephens, Mr. Mill (who was Stephens's executor) took ashore the log book, or church bible beforementioned, and that he had tore out several leaves in which were particularized the slaves he had sent on freight the preceeding voyage or voyages; you will therefore please to observe when this book is produced, whether or not any such thing has been done, and if it has, I think you need no farther proofs, and dare to say that Mr. Bell, Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Grosse will be found also to have shipped off a good many slaves in the same ship.

As I have given a sketch of the times here in the publick letter, there buying remains only to tell you that gold commands the trade; there is no a slave without one ounce of gold at least on it, and the windward Coast has been so ranfacked, that there is no such thing as getting gold, even though you sell your goods from forty to fifty *per cent.* under prime cost; the next best article is fine broad striped taffats, flowered cuttanees, Patna chintz, with small black flowers, fine white grounds, well chose printed linens and cottons, very large brass pans, fine Silesias, Danish and birding guns, plain taffatys, fine mixed Romauls, sattin stripes, half pint tankards. Goods not in demand as follows; powder, pewter, knives,
ells

ells of no kind, halffays, Negannepauts, Bejutapauts, checks, cherry-derries, and blue bandanoes; there is at present no Ashantee trade, which is the reason powder and pewter are not called for; however it will not be prudent to send ships out without these articles.

I am told Messrs. Ross and Mill expect to be called before the House of Commons, and that they are ready prepared for the occasion, but I fancy they will be terribly disconcerted upon hearing the church bible called for.

Mr. Wallace, who now commands the *Africa*, was Capt. Stephens's chief mate all the three voyages he made to the Gold Coast; he should therefore be certainly brought before the bar of the house, and sworn whether he ever knew or heard of any slaves being shipped on freight on board the *Africa*.

I shall take it as a particular favour if you would transmit Mr. Smith a copy of the publick letter, or other letters I may have wrote you, which I have not sent him copies of.

Much about the time this reaches you, Capt. Howe, of the ship *Maisguin*, of Bristol, will be arrived, and as he has been upwards of seven months on the Coast, he can inform you of many particulars which will correspond exactly with my publick letter.

Please excuse this hurried epistle; I shall be more particular in my next, have therefore only to wish you health and prosperity, and to assure you that I am with the greatest esteem and respect,

DEAR SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

RICHARD BREW.

GENTLEMEN,

Castle Brew, October 1st, 1771.

I Did myself the honour to write to you the 25th of last August, copy of which goes herewith, but through hurry to get my letter on board the *Richmond*, I forgot to mention a common practice of the committee's governors, Messrs. Mill and Bell in particular, which is their selling great numbers of slaves to the general and fiscal of Elmina, for Portuguese tobacco, whenever that article is in great demand, the conse-

quence of which is extremely prejudicial to the shipping; first, by getting supplied with a commodity which commands the trade from the natives, and secondly, by disposing of such a number of slaves to our natural rivals the Dutch, which should certainly circulate amongst the British shipping; to this it will be objected, that the captains of ships are at liberty to purchase tobacco as well as the governors; which is very true, but then parting with prime slaves, and slaves that are perhaps seasoned and used to the ships, would not only lengthen their voyages, but dishearten the rest of their cargoes; and it happens but seldom that the captains can barter goods for tobacco with the Portuguese, as our wary and industrious neighbours the Dutch take care either to send convoys down with the Portuguese, or dispatch them away in the night, with orders to stretch out to sea, to prevent the English ships from dealing with them.

I will however do the committee the justice to say, they have formerly sent out positive orders to the governor and council, forbidding them or any others of their servants, to trade directly or indirectly with the Dutch; but the committee's orders are no more regarded on this side the tropick than yours would be, should you think proper to send any.

I am informed the excuse these gentlemen give for selling slaves to the Dutch is, to procure tobacco for the payment of the committee's slaves and other expences; but it is a known truth that not above one tenth of what they purchase is consumed, otherwise than in the purchase of slaves; however I think many methods may be fallen on to purchase tobacco besides giving slaves for it; for instance, if the committee made application to the West India company of Holland, to furnish them with a sufficient number of rolls annually, to defray the expences of the British forts, at forty or fifty shillings, or even at three pound per roll, to be paid by the committee at home, it would be infinitely better than buying it from their servants, at six pounds five shillings per roll, and the primest goods in the supplies picked out by them for payment; and even if this method was not adopted, the committee have only to send out cowries and Silefias sufficient for this purpose, and tobacco may be always procured from the Portuguese, under three pound sterling per roll, including the expence of a long boat or shallop to be always kept employed for this purpose.

This

This moment I received a letter from Capt. John Harwood, of the Snow Greenwich, of Bristol, in which is the following paragraph.

“ I hear the chief of Tantomquerry, Mr. Miles, was flogged in his hall, by a caboceer (not Dutton) also Capt. Blundell of the Corsican Hero, of Liverpool, and the Second of the fort were severely beat, and all their cloaths tore off, and were some time confined in the town; the Second went to the water side to escort Blundell up, and upon my boat's appearing in sight, the Tantom people sent off two canoes to take her, thinking she belonged to Harwood, but finding their mistake never molested her.”

I have taken a great deal of pains, gentlemen, in all my letters upon African affairs, to prove the inutility of the forts in their present shamefully defenceless state. I leave you to judge of their condition, when the natives will dare to strike a governor in his own hall. Can such a fort, or such a governor, render the smallest assistance or protection to a private trader? can such a fort be worth supporting at the expence of 6, 7 or 800*l. per annum*? will the committee pretend to say that such a fort is tenable; that it is not constantly in the power of the natives; and that it is not owing more to their good dispositions, than the committee's wise regulations, that you have a fort at all?

The committee will possibly write out to their governor and council to enquire whether it is true or not, that Mr. Miles, Capt. Blundell, and the Second, were flogged in the manner set forth in Captain Harwood's letter; but as it is more than probable Capt. Blundell, on his arrival in England, will be able to shew you he has had ocular demonstration, they may save themselves that trouble.

A most pernicious practice has of late crept into the trade of the Gold Coast, which is the giving gold upon slaves; and it is greatly to be wished that some methods may be fallen upon to put a timely stop to it, otherwise it will be impossible for any man to continue to trade here with any prospect of success; Appolonia, the only place from which the shipping used to be supplied with gold, you are effectually shut out from; that fort, Dixcove, Succondee, and Commenda being factories to the governor of Cape Coast, who is so plentifully supplied with gold from

these places, that he carries every thing before him ; for the truth of which I appeal to all the Liverpool and Bristol captains that have been here this year.

Formerly owners of ships used to send out double cargoes of goods, one for slaves, the other for gold ; if slaves happened to be dearer than usual, the cargo for gold was thrown into the slave cargo in order to fill the ship ; on the other hand, if slaves were reasonable the gold cargo was disposed of for gold and ivory, at a profit of thirty, forty, or fifty *per cent.* which went a great way towards paying the portlige bill in the West Indies ; as I have frequently known from five to fifteen hundred pounds sterling in gold and ivory carried off from this coast, over and above a compleat cargo of slaves. How strangely things are reversed now, you have experienced ; we scarce see a ship go off with her complement of slaves, notwithstanding her cargo is laid in from eighteen to twenty pounds sterling *per head* on an average, reckoning goods at prime cost, without a shilling charges on them ; a great part of which they are obliged to sell where they can for gold, greatly under prime cost, or lie here till their provisions are all expended, and their bottoms eat out with the worms.

As the committee do not appear inclinable to make any regulations in favour of the private trader, I imagine you will be under the necessity of laying your grievances before parliament this next sessions. I have therefore only to add once more, gentlemen, that I am ready and willing to depose upon oath (before any person deputed for that purpose) to the truth of the following charges exhibited by me against the committee and their servants.

I. and principally, That every governor of Cape Coast since the year 1763, to the present governor (Mr. Hippisley excepted) have shipped off great numbers of slaves on their own accounts, contrary to act of parliament and restrictions of the committee.

II. That the servants of the committee who are paid by the publick, such as doctors, seconds, serjeants, gunners, and even soldiers, have been employed as factors and traders for the governors of Cape Coast and other chiefs of forts.

III.

III. That the governors of the forts, particularly Messrs. Mill and Bell, make a practice of selling considerable numbers of slaves annually to the Dutch, contrary to the laws and regulations of the service.

IV. That several of the governors continue to employ floating factories, to the great detriment of the shipping and free traders.

V. That the governors of the forts carry on an extensive trade with each other, contrary to act of parliament, and greatly to the prejudice of the British fair trader; as the governor of Cape Coast (over and above the advantages he reaps from the publick supplies) is so abundantly stocked with cargoes from England, that he can give the chiefs far better assortments than any ship whatsoever, and can afford a much better price, being complimented with the freight of his goods out, and not being saddled with any expences incidental to the private and fair trader.

VI. That it is a common practice with Mr. Bell to employ the poor starved soldiers, serjeant, gunner, and committee's slaves, in his own business; that he frequently keeps the poor whites going in canoes on board ships in the road to watch his goods coming on shore; which severe service accounts for the great mortality among them, and by which a poor soldier narrowly escaped drowning a few days ago, being overset with a canoe-load of rum coming on shore. The coopers he employs making ankers, &c. for him, and the other slaves when and wherever they can be any ways serviceable to him.

As we have no justices of the peace in this country, it could not be expected that my accusations against the committee and their servants could be properly authenticated; I am, however, determined to assemble as many captains of ships as I can, and to swear before them to the truth of the whole; and also that on the arrival of a man of war, I will confirm the same by making a fresh affidavit before the captain; this, as I am situated, is all in my power, or in the power of any other man to do.

By this opportunity, I expect to send you such proofs of Mr. Mill's having shipped off between sixty and seventy slaves on freight by the Africa, late Captain Stephens, the last time he left the Coast, as will clear up all your doubts. I am, however, extremely concerned, that the committee's behaviour has obliged me to take this very disagreeable step,

as I never intended to hurt any individual in the service, particularly Mr. Mill; my quarrel being intirely to the system; and although Mr. Mill's extensive trade cannot fail to prejudice the fair trader, yet, he is certainly the fittest man by much in the committee's service to be at the head of affairs; therefore the discarding him will not mend the matter, if he is succeeded either by Mr. Bell, Mr. Drew, or Mr. Trinder, the present council; you may depend upon it, they will tread in his steps as far as their shallow capacities will permit them.

Mr. Bell, who is next in succession, is a man of the most rapacious, avaricious, mean disposition of any in the service; his pusillanimity is such, that he will give up every point to the natives, be they ever so disgraceful or injurious to the honour of the nation; therefore, should Mr. Mill be superseded by him, we shall be in a much worse situation than we are at present; and as for Messrs. Drew and Trinder, they are totally unfit to be at the head of affairs: therefore, it is my humble opinion, that we stand in need of a total change both of men and measures.

Inclosed you will receive a certificate*, signed by Mr. Robert Johnston, a private trader; he is a very intelligent man, and has served the committee many years, both on this coast and Senegal; he is now going off the Coast, and proposes taking his affidavit to the truth of what he has advanced, on his arrival at Barbadoes, and will send the same to Samuel Smith, Esq; Old Jewry, London.

You will please also to receive another certificate* from Mr. Isaac Garrick, who formerly served Mr. Mill; and which, with Mr. Johnston's certificate, I hope, will be sufficient to convince you, that I have advanced nothing but facts against the committee's servants.

The committee, I find, are labouring very hard to find out something reprehensible in my conduct whilst I was in their service; I cannot, however, help thinking, it would redound much more to their credit to endeavour to exculpate themselves and their servants from the heavy charges brought against them, than to attempt to amuse you by such a poor mean subterfuge; they represent me, I am told, as a disappointed peevish man, and are endeavouring to prepossess all they can against my

* See this at the end of the letters.

remonstrances.

remonstrances. I am not, however, without hopes, that my conduct will be approved by all unbiaſſed, unprejudiced men; if I am peeviſh and diſappointed, their ignorance and folly, and the ſcandalous behaviour of their ſervants, has helped greatly to make me ſo; I hope, however, it will be granted, that a diſappointed peeviſh man may be honeſt and deſpiſe a falſehood, as much as any member whatſoever of their board.

It happens very lucky for the committee, that they and I are at ſo great a diſtance from each other, for if I could attend the cuſtitor baron of the exchequer, when the committee carry their accounts to him to be audited, I dare ſay, I could unravel many iniquitous ſcenes, which you are and muſt ſtill remain ignorant of.

I have not at preſent to add, but that I am with the greateſt eſteem and reſpect,

GENTLEMEN,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

RICHARD BREW.

DEAR SIR,

Caſtle Brew, October 15, 1771.

INCLOSED is a duplicate of my letter of the 25th of laſt Auguſt, ſince which I am favoured with yours of the 20th of June laſt, by the Barbara, Captain Culshaw.

You will ſee by my letters to your committee, dated the 25th of Auguſt and 15th of October, that I have not been idle, and that I have ſent them two certificates, which muſt convince all unbiaſſed men that my representations are founded on ſtubborn facts; but the ſcandalous partiality of the committee towards their ſervants is ſuch, that they would not liſten to the angel Gabriel if he ſaid any thing prejudicial of them. I hope, however, you will not reſt till you obtain ſuch regulations and reſtrictions as will put the trade upon a proper footing.

The articles in demand are the ſame as when I wrote to you laſt; gold is ſtill the greateſt *of all articles* in this golden country; the prohibition on powder, pewter, &c. as by my laſt, ſtill continues. Slaves are exceeding ſcarce, price ten ounces men, and eight ounces women, to the blacks, and an ounce advance to the whites. Goods wanted by veſſels in this road at preſent: the Ingram wants one hundred and twenty ſlaves, the Corſican

Hero

Hero fifty or sixty, the Nancy, Cazneau, forty or fifty, the Greenwich one hundred and thirty, the Africa taken up. The N——, Ritchie; the Barbara, Culshaw; the Venus, Goodwin; the Friendship, Cummings; the Hannah, Hughes; the Charlotte, Blundell; all new comers; and the John, Bold; the Union, Pole; the Austin, Wilcox, and Captain Price, soon expected, besides rum vessels: I therefore leave you to judge of the shocking state of the trade here, and what reason you have to expect any alteration for the better; had the eight hundred slaves, that were sent off in the Peggy, Captain Mill, and the Richmond chartered ship, circulated amongst the shipping, the Ingram, Corsican Hero, Nancy, Greenwich and Africa, would have been off the Coast, and would have left a fine opening for these new comers; besides, the price would have continued at nine and seven ounces.

Captain Culshaw has had great success in the time he has been down; he tells me, he has purchased fifty-seven slaves; he is a very industrious man, and I dare say, will make a voyage, if any man makes one this year.

The gold trade as well as the slave trade is ruined; Mr. Mill has three long boats to windward and Cape Appolonia fort, purchasing gold for him. Seventeen and sixpenny romauls are now sold for $2\frac{1}{2}$ ackies gold, and most other things in proportion. Indeed the disadvantages trade labours under just now are incredible, and I am much mistaken if any ship this year will get interest for her money, except the prices are very high in the West-Indies, and little or no mortality amongst the slaves; be assured, I will acquaint you with every material alteration in the trade, should any happen.

The letter by Captain Bold (which I fear you have not received) contained a certificate* signed by thirteen captains of ships, relative to the risque merchants in England run, by the committee's not allowing private traders to lodge their effects in the forts in common with their servants; you will, therefore, please to apply to Mr. Smith, for a copy both of the letter and certificate, as Mr. Camplin, secretary to the committee, has prevailed on Captain Howe, of Bristol, to sign a recantation of

* See this at the end of the letters.

of a former remonstrance concerning the factories established by the committee's servants. I have only to wish you health and prosperity, and that I am with the greatest esteem,

DEAR SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

RICHARD BREW.

DEAR SIR,

Castle Brew, October 16, 1771.

BY this opportunity I have wrote a letter to the committee of enquiry in Liverpool, respecting the London committee and their servants, and have sent a copy of another letter I wrote them the 25th of August last, both of which I have wrote Mr. Miles Barber to send you copies of; as you write me, you have made some representations to a member of government relative to the present establishment.

By these letters you will perceive I have sent home Isaac Garrick's certificate, relative to Mr. Mill, which I hope will clear up all doubts of his having shipped off slaves; your testimony upon this occasion, as Garrick has mentioned you in the certificate, will strengthen the thing greatly.

I have sent the committee of enquiry another certificate, signed by Mr. Robert Johnston, and which he proposes swearing to in Barbadoes, as he goes off in the ship that carries this, and assures me he will send you the affidavit properly attested, which I hope and earnestly intreat you will immediately transmit to Arthur Heywood, Esq; or the committee of enquiry in Liverpool.

The committee's representing me as a disappointed peevish man gives me little concern; I am however determined to persevere in detecting and exposing their scandalous practices when and wherever I can, being fully convinced, that if every nerve is not strained this sessions of parliament, to regulate the Gold Coast trade, and restrain them and their servants within due bounds, Messrs. Ross and Mill, and their numerous adherents, will soon have the forts entirely in their own hands.

I have read Mr. Tweed's pamphlet; his account of the blacks I think a very just one, and what he says of the Windward Coast is very likely true, but I am a perfect stranger to that trade.

Q

Do

Do not forget to write to Mr. Heywood or Mr. Barber for copies of my letters of the 25th of August, and 15th of October; also for a copy of the regulations I have given them; and when you get them, you should circulate them amongst the friends of a free and uninterrupted trade to Africa. I am

DEAR SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

RICHARD BREW.

Mr. ROBERT JOHNSTON's Certificate of Mr. CHARLES BELL, Governor of Annamaboe, refusing him Protection and Assistance.

THESE are to certify all whom it may concern, that on the 30th Day of October 1770, my house at Winnebah, in which was deposited effects to the amount of two thousand pounds sterling and upwards, was set on fire as is supposed by my own servant, he being detected in plundering the house (during the conflagration;) upon which I was advised by Mr. Trinder, the chief of the fort, also by the caboceers and town's people to secure him in irons in the fort, which I accordingly did; and at his own request administered fetish to him, according to the laws and custom of the country, notwithstanding I had sufficient proofs before, and by which fetish he was condemned, and became my property according to the said laws and customs.

And I do farther certify and declare, that in the month of December following, I came up to Annamaboe, and went on shore to transact some business with Mr. Brew; that I no sooner got into his house, but it was surrounded by the town's soldiers with drums, musquets and other weapons; all of whom threatned, if I did not send down to Winnebah for the aforementioned servant, who is an Annamaboe man, and deliver him up to them, they would not suffer me to go off the beach, and would carry me into the bush; upon which I waited on Mr. Charles Bell, the present chief of Annamaboe fort, and painted my situation to him in the most pathetic manner I could, and claimed the protection and assistance of the fort; to all which he answered that it was not in his power to
render

render me the smallest assistance; that he would not involve the committee in any dispute with the natives upon any account whatsoever; also that he would not fire a gun in my defence; upon which I was obliged to return to Mr. Brew, who became my security to the town's people for the delivery of the man; thus was I obliged to give up a man who had not only plundered me, but in all probability set fire to my house, by which my loss amounted to upwards of six hundred pounds sterling.

And I farther declare, whilst my effects were carrying to the fort during the conflagration, that the soldiers, slaves and other servants of the committee, were as industrious in plundering me as the town's people.—To all which I am ready to attest on oath when called upon.

Winnebah, October 1, 1771.

ROBERT JOHNSTON.

Another Certificate of Mr. JOHNSTON's.

THESE are to certify the British merchants trading to Africa, or whom else it may concern, that I have perused the accusations set forth by Mr. Brew against the servants of the committee, in his letter to the committee of enquiry, in Liverpool, of this date; and that I am ready and willing to attest upon oath to the truth of the five first articles, *viz.*

I. That several governors of Cape Coast, since the year 1763 to this present time, have shipped off great numbers of slaves on their own accounts contrary to act of parliament.

II. That the servants of the committee, who are paid by the publick, have been frequently employed as traders for the governors.

III. That the governors of forts make a practice of selling great numbers of slaves to the Dutch.

IV. That several governors continue to employ floating factories, to the great prejudice of the trade.

V. That the governor and chiefs of forts carry on a very considerable trade with each other, to the great detriment of the shipping.

And I do farther certify and declare, that I will take my affidavit in form, to the truth of these accusations on my arrival in Barbadoes, and will transmit the same properly attested to the committee of enquiry in

Liverpool, Miles Barber, Esq; or Samuel Smith, Esq; London. Given under my hand this 30th of September, 1771.

In presence of
JOHN HARWOOD,
HORATIO SMITH.

ROBERT JOHNSTON.

A Certificate of ISAAC GARRICK.

Annamaboe, October 1st, 1771.

THESE are to certify all whom it may concern, that I (Isaac Garrick) was employed upwards of three years on the Coast, by David Mill, Esq; governor of Cape Coast Castle, in the following stations; first, as a factor at Shadoc, an English town three miles to the eastward of Barracoe, and afterwards as master of a shallop in the Gaboon trade; that during the time of my keeping the factory at the abovementioned place, there was a private trader, called John Hyde, came to settle at Shadoc also, of which I acquainted Mr. Mill, who immediately wrote me for answer, that I must endeavour to get him turned out of the town if possible, or trade in such a manner that it would be impossible for him to continue there without a very great loss; upon which I followed his instructions and soon got him turned out of the town.

And I also declare that on or about the month of September in the year 1769, the abovementioned David Mill, Esq; sent me off the Coast, a passenger in the ship Africa, commanded by the late Capt. John Stephens, in order to purchase a vessel for him in America, and he told me, he had shipped upwards of sixty slaves, which were marked M S, upon his account and risque, to answer this purpose; that I accordingly did proceed in the said ship for the West Indies, having first settled my accounts with the said Mr. Mill, and received a note from him for fifteen pounds sterling, the balance due to me on leaving the Coast; that upon our arrival in the West Indies, I found it was impossible for me to go on with the plan of purchasing a vessel, owing to the great mortality amongst his slaves; that I then proceeded to America, and from thence to London; when I applied to Mess. Rofs and Mill for the aforesaid balance due to me from Mr. Mill, produced to them my instructions, and

note from Mr. Mill, which they refusing to pay, I drew up a petition to the committee of the company of merchants trading to Africa, in which I set forth the whole of my connections and transactions with Mr. Mill, which I shewed to his brother Capt. Hercules Mill, who told me, if I would make out my accounts, and suppress the petition, I should be immediately paid; which I accordingly did, and the next day waited upon Capt. Mill, at the Edinburgh coffee house, when he told me he was ready to pay me if I would deliver up my instructions and papers to him, which through necessity I was obliged to do, and then received from Capt. Mill, a bill on Mess. Ross and Mill, for my balance, which bill they accepted and paid me.

And I do further certify, and declare, that when I drew up the aforementioned petition to the committee, I shewed it to Samuel Smith, Esq; of the Old Jewry, London, who perused it more than once; for the truth of which I appeal to that gentleman, and also declare that I am ready and willing to make oath on the Holy Evangelists to the truth of what is set forth in every part of this certificate. Given under my hand this 1st Day of October, 1771.

ISAAC GARRICK.

A Certificate of the Necessity of the Use of the Forts to private Traders.

WHEREAS the house of Mr. Robert Johnston, a private trader at Winnebago, has lately been burnt, and a great quantity of effects belonging to merchants of London and Liverpool in possession of the said Mr. Johnson, were in the utmost danger of being destroyed by the said accident; we give it as our opinion, that private traders settled under the protection of the forts, should have liberty in common with the committee's servants of lodging all their effects whatsoever in the forts, and that a proper apartment or apartments should be allotted them for that purpose, to secure the property of all such merchants, whose captains are frequently under the necessity of trusting their goods with those gentlemen; and we are also of opinion, that for want of such security,

private

private traders are greatly discouraged from settling under the forts, which is extremely detrimental to the trade in general.

Annamaboe Road, November 2, 1770,

Master of the ship Marlborough, of Bristol,	- -	JOHN MARSHALL.
Ditto of the ship John, of Liverpool,	- - -	ARTHUR BOLD.
Ditto of the ship Maisguin, of Bristol,	- -	ROBERT HOWE.
Ditto of the ship Roebuck, of ditto,	- -	THO. GULLAN.
Ditto of the ship Friendship, of Barbadoes,	- -	ROBERT ERSKINE.
Ditto of the ship Swallow, of Liverpool,	- -	GEO. FLEETWOOD.
Ditto of the snow Dispatch, of ditto,	- -	JOHN RITCHIE.
Ditto of the ship Kitty, of ditto	- -	JAMES BROWN.
Ditto of the ship Sally, of Boston,	- - -	DAN. M'CARTHY.
Ditto of the ship Sultan, of Rhode Island,	- -	SILAS COOK.
Ditto of the brig Othello, of ditto,	- -	JOHN DUNCAN.
Ditto of the brig Peggy, of ditto,	- - -	CHARLES MOORE.
Ditto of the sloop Adventure, of ditto,	- - -	THOMAS ROGERS.

N. B. Fourteen sail in the road of Annamaboe this day.

A very just and sensible Letter of Mr. Arbuthnot's on the miserable State of the Forts, addressed to Lord Hillsborough, which undoubtedly would have met with the Attention of the Board of Trade, had that Nobleman continued at the Head of that Department.

MY LORD,

HAVING been perfectly well acquainted with the late Captain Tonyn's intention of laying before your lordship, not only the state of the forts and settlements on the Gold Coast of Africa, (where I had the happiness of his friendship and particular confidence) but also some observations on the trade, the footing the governors are on there, and the mode of paying the people in the committee's service; I have, with the greatest diffidence, ventured to address your lordship on that subject.

I have the honour to be a lieutenant in his majesty's land service; being upon half-pay, preferred an active to an inactive state of life; and obtained leave to accept of a commission offered me by the committee of the company of merchants trading to Africa; where having resided some time,

time, I had the opportunity of making the following remarks, which I beg leave to submit to your lordship's consideration.

The Dutch forts, my lord, are so contiguous to the British on the Gold Coast of Africa, that it appears essentially necessary the latter should be kept in a state of defence; but they are, at present, deficient in every particular, conducive to that end: which is not owing, as has been alledged, to the insufficiency of parliamentary allowance for the support of them, but to the avarice of those intrusted by the committee with the direction of affairs on that Coast; who, preferring private interest to public welfare, not only make a job of the repairs of the forts, but also are great gainers by the deficiency of public stores in general.

It has been asserted, though I am apt to think without foundation, that unless the governors, or chiefs of British forts on that coast are allowed to trade, the Dutch would engross the whole, and entirely ruin our commercial interest there. On the contrary, I have reason to believe the trade would be carried on to a greater extent, and the forts would be of more public benefit, were the governors strictly prohibited from trading. If this measure was adopted, it is beyond a doubt, that many considerable merchants would establish factories on that coast, and supply them with larger and better assortments of goods than the forts, on the present plan, can be expected to be furnished with; therefore, the trade would not only be preserved, but greatly extended; the advantageous consequences of which, to this nation and the colonies, are sufficiently conspicuous.

The governors then, it is to be hoped, would sustain, as is their duty, the dignity and commercial interest of the nation in general; be a curb to the Dutch; keep the natives in due submission; and instead of opposing, and obstructing, would protect, and assist the British traders—which salutary purposes are now sacrificed to self interest.

By the present regulations, the committee's governors are restricted from exporting slaves on their own account, but are permitted to deal to what extent they please on the Coast. Their advantage by this is 20 per cent. which they charge the shipping over and above what is given to the black traders. This considerable difference in trade induces the governors and masters of ships to intrigue with the natives, in opposition

to each other, and to endeavour by bribes and other artifices to allure them to their separate interests.

These dissensions, my lord, are manifestly detrimental to the trade, and even endanger the safety of the British subject. For the natives taking advantage of them, not only enhance the price of slaves, but are become so arrogant and daring, that there are very recent instances of their seizing and beating the governors themselves. When they, who assume the particular distinction of having the British flag carried before them whenever they travel, tamely suffer for their private trading interest such disgraceful insults—your lordship may easily judge how the dignity of the British flag is supported; and what protection the British traders (being their rivals) are to expect from trading governors in that distant part of the world.

To explain the method of paying the committee's servants, it is necessary to observe, that the governors, or chiefs of forts, in that service, have the advantage of, what is there called, furnishing for their forts; that is, advancing goods of their own for the pay of the garrison, repairs, and many other charges allowed by the committee for the support of the forts. These expences they defray with rum, tobacco, and coarse cloth: articles in no demand, and only fit to purchase provisions; but are repaid in the very best trading goods, as India silks, and other valuable articles which come out among the supplies; so that this emolument amounts to double their salary, which will evidently appear from the following instance, *viz.* a governor issues on pay, to his garrison, one gallon of rum at 6s. it costs him but 1s. 8d. and is now so bad an article on the Coast, that even for provisions it scarcely goes for 2s. 6d. 6s. is transferred to the governor's credit, for which he draws goods that are really worth what they are charged on pay; so for 1s. 8d. he gets 6s. and the person paid with the rum has but 2s. 6d. for 6s. of his pay. By this method of furnishing, the committee is always in arrears to the governors; who, therefore, upon the arrival of the annual ship, claim the privilege of selecting for themselves the very best goods for trade. Thus they take their salaries, as well as arrears; and by that time the governor of Cape Coast (whose share is by far the greatest) and the other governors have
chosen

chosen out their quotas, the whole annual supplies are nearly exhausted : A very good reason for paying the rest of the committee's servants with what goods they please.

The council on that coast has, in reality, the disposal of the whole parliamentary allowance (except what is reserved for the committee's expences at home;) they make out the annual indent, which is always implicitly complied with by the committee; whereby they never fail to have out a prime assortment of goods fit for trade; and, to accomplish this private purpose, they are not only sparing of stores for public utility, but also curtail those articles of the supplies which are not advantageous: for this last reason, they do not order above half the quantity of English brandy that might be used among the forts. In lieu of the other half they have prime goods, and a very great advantage by supplying the deficiency of that spirit with American rum; which, as beforementioned, they now buy for 1s. 8d. and always issue on pay at 6s. per gallon.

It is averred, that not less than ten thousand gallons are thus annually supplied; if so, this advance of 4s. 4d. per gallon amounts to a considerable sum.

The chief motive that induced me to give your lordship the trouble of this address, was to represent the unhappy situation of the poor soldiers in this part of Africa: but as a minute detail of their wretched circumstances would take up too much of that time which your lordship can so ill spare from weightier affairs, permit me only to observe, that if the forts were well fortified, (which is quite the reverse) they could not, though but feebly attacked, be defended by the present garrisons; for the miserable soldiers on that coast are originally the refuse of every service enlisted for in London; many of them afflicted with incurable disorders, and almost all of them unfit for duty when sent to Africa: where, not to mention the climate, they find themselves, in a great measure, destitute of every necessary of life; are ill paid, ill clothed, and totally undisciplined. The very sight of them excites pity, and is a national disgrace.

To be explicit on this subject would far exceed the bounds of a letter; but if honoured with permission to wait on your lordship, I hope to be able to set in the clearest light any thing herein hinted at, either relative to the trade, or the system of government on the Gold Coast.

Should this be thought rather out of the road of my duty, I hope the misfortune of Captain Tonyn's death having prevented its coming to your lordship's knowledge through a proper channel, will be some apology for my presuming to lay it before you. I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect,

MY LORD,

February 28, 1772.

Your Lordship's, &c.

That these grievances still continue will appear from the following extract of a letter from the Gold Coast of Africa, to a merchant at Liverpool, dated 30th of March, 1772, by the Weazel sloop of war.

THE times since the Ingram failed are infinitely worse than when she lay here; for these three months, I will take upon me to say, there has not been three hundred slaves sold amongst all the shipping in this road of Annamaboe, and we have seldom had less than from twelve to eighteen sail of top-sail vessels in it. They have at last got the price of the slaves up to eleven ounces for men, and nine ounces for women; therefore, I would not have you, by any means, be concerned to Annamaboe for some time.—There is no buying slaves now without you give two ounces of gold on each; to procure which, you must sell your goods 20 per cent. under prime cost, and you may think yourself happy to get it even at that rate. The black traders are now got to such a pass, they will not take the primest smoak taffaty, as they call it, but will oblige you to give seven ackies of gold in its stead, and they will have gold also for any article that is not ready sale in the market; in short, the nature of the trade is so much altered, that a man who was here but two years ago would be at his wit's end to make a purchase.

Another great disadvantage every vessel must labour under, that comes here is, that Mr. Mill, governor of Cape Coast Castle, and Mr. Bell, governor of Annamaboe, are both determined to go home with the next annual store ship *, and till then you may be assured, they will not only

sell

* Probably these gentlemen were alarmed at the attempt last year to call the committee-men to account; but, when they hear the bill did not pass the House, may lay aside their fears, and wait till justice overtakes them by an act of parliament this winter to supersede and bring them to a proper examination.

The benefits arising to Great Britain from the employ of near two hundred thousand ton of shipping and thirteen thousand seamen, and the advantages accruing to the revenue of above one million and an half of money annually, will shew the African Trade to be an object worthy the strictest attention, both of the legislature and the community.

F I N I S.

ERRATA in the TREATISE.

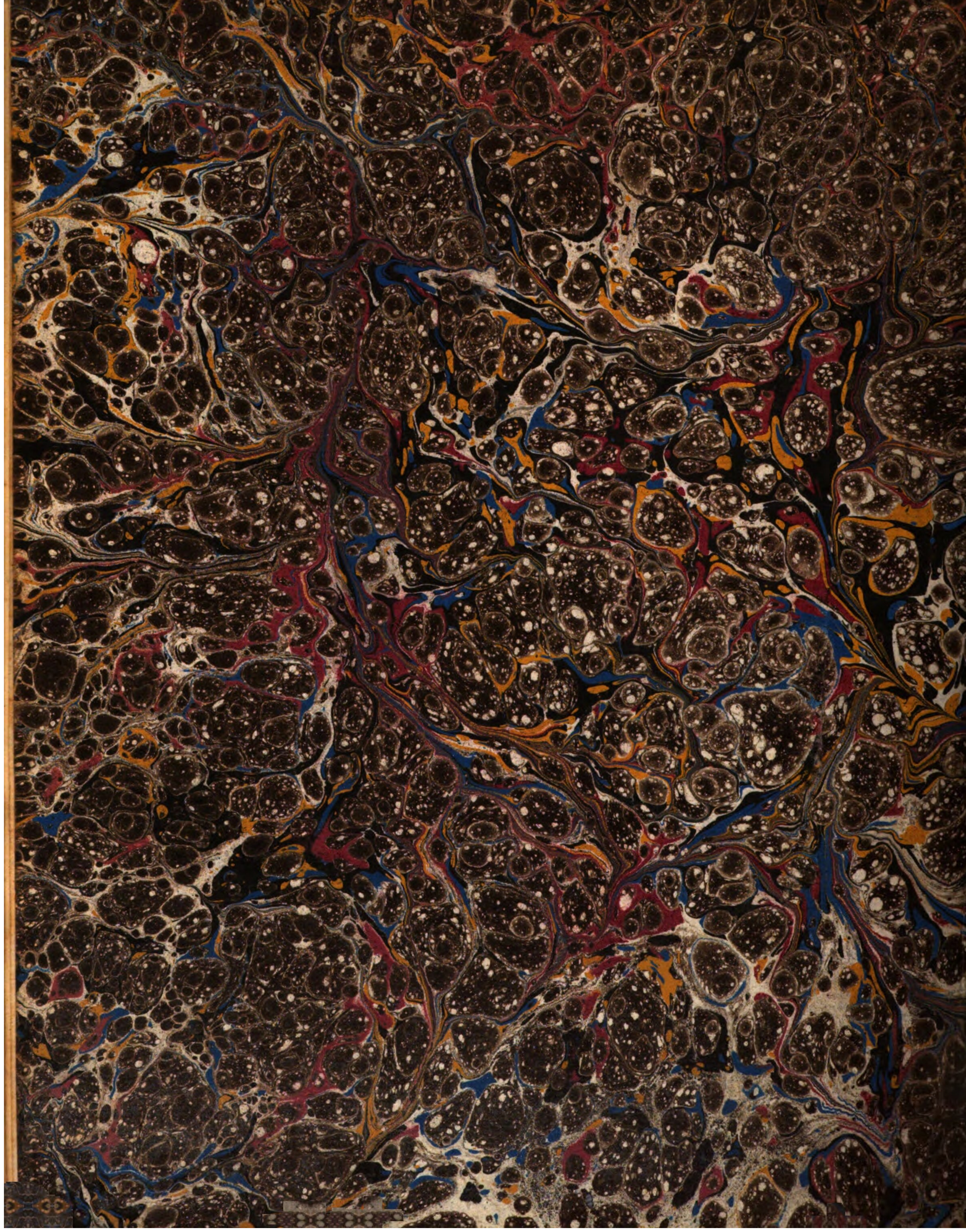
P. 18. l. 21. *for ar read far.* p. 33. l. 3. *for direction r. distinction.*

ERRATA in the APPENDIX.

P. 22. l. 10. *for nor r. not.* p. 83. l. 28. *for greaty r. greatly.* p. 104. l. 25. *for buying remains r. remains.* p. 104. l. 26. *for a slave r. buying a slave.* p. 104. l. 29. *for taffats r. taffaties.*













A treatise upon the Trade from Great-Britain to Africa hunbly recommended
to the attention of government

London 1772

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